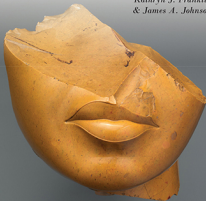


INCOMPLETE ARCHAEOLOGIES

Assembling Knowledge in the Past and Present

Edited by
Emily Miller Bonney,
Kathryn J. Franklin
& James A. Johnson



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*Emily Miller Bonney, Kathryn J. Franklin
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Back cover: Sheet bronze helmet from Brezje pri Trebelnem Tumulus XII, Grave 37 (image courtesy
of the Naturhistorisches Museum Wien)

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Introduction: towards incomplete archaeologies?

*Kathryn J. Franklin, James A. Johnson
and Emily Miller Bonney*

This volume is concerned with assembling. We take as our object the assembly of things, persons, ideas, times and spaces, as well as the effective surfaces created through such processes – assemblages – and the agencies invoked and sustained by assembling, dismantling and re-assembling.

In this collection of chapters we seek to move beyond the perceived complete and final affordances of the *assemblage* to a more thorough and critical interrogation of the always-incomplete processes of *assembling*. The assemblage has long been a mainstay in archaeology and has recently undergone serious re-examination and categorical revision (Latour 1999; 2005; Harris 2012, drawing upon DeLanda 2006; Fowler 2013). We wish to push the edge of discourse forward by recuperating to assemblages aggregate complexity, temporality and contingency; our primary strategy is a dismantling of allegedly complete and finished groups of archaeological objects and a shift of our focus to the intrinsic incompleteness of the processes involved in constructing social agents and their material worlds.

Critically, and perhaps paradoxically, we focus on the ongoing, contingent nature of assembling that highlights categorical incompleteness: that is, a condition of being-in-process, unfinished and open to further addition and transformation. While we build upon newly implemented and somewhat (re)invigorated approaches to the archaeological assemblage, we also draw focus to the ways in which archaeological inquiry remains rooted in notions of completeness and finalism. Such inquiries and their subject matter potentially distract, if not mislead, scholars from developing more comprehensive understandings of the continually ongoing and necessarily contingent processes of assembling that are both bound to and masked by the notion of assemblage. We suggest that instead of treating assemblages as fixed points from which the meaning of the past is revealed that we expand the scope of our investigations to explore how the complexity of meaning making involves multiple actions, temporalities and contingencies that are never finished, never quite whole. We acknowledge the scholars, and their analyses, that have critically redefined the ontology of assemblages, arguing that they *are* in-process or historically contingent in their entangledness, bundledness, or enmeshedness (Keane 2005; Harris 2012; Hodder 2012; Fowler 2013). However, once we assert that assemblages *are incomplete* the practices of material production, maintenance and reproduction take center-stage and our priority must be their *assembling*.

To do this, we instigate a more critical and reflexive archaeology through more explicit and exploratory (if not experimental) engagements with the philosophical foundations upon which our current arguments and truths are built. These logical truths were at one time a source of intellectual comfort and security rooted in the certainty that coming closer to being ‘right’ or more ‘accurate’ was possible. The conceptualization of assemblage from this perspective provided both ontological and epistemological reassurance that the objects of study were not only real, but could be definitively and totally understood through analysis. We wish to push archaeologists out of such false senses of security into a state of restlessness, of anxious explorations that encourage, if not demand, the search and use of alternative approaches to meaning making. We challenge ourselves (the contributors to the volume) as well as our readers to adopt, if not construct outright, more self-reflexive and creative perspectives of past cultures through the lenses of ongoing, never-quite complete assemblings.

Problems with the assemblage?

The complexity of object-human relationships has been extensively and variously re-evaluated by a number of explorers (or exploders) of the boundaries between human agents, objects, and social phenomena. Discussions of agency vs structure (Dobres and Robb 2000; Pauketat 2013, building from Giddens 1984), of materiality and meaning (Keane 2005; Miller 2005; Ingold 2007), and over the location of the social in human vs nonhuman action or agency (Latour 1999; 2005; Knappett and Malafouris 2008; Harris 2012; Hodder 2012) have proved as productively divisive as they have been revelatory. Such approaches have indicated that much of archaeology’s epistemological uncertainty is bound up in fundamental cognitive and philosophical ideas about whether meaning is in fact ‘made,’ where and when in the Cartesian encounter of Mind-Material that making occurs (assuming of course that such an opposition exists), and how we grapple with, or make sense of, such makings.

A broader challenge than archaeology’s epistemic struggles with types and culture groups, the concept of assemblage has been drawn into ontological debates centering on the most productive ways to conceptualize things-in-the-world (Deleuze and Guattari 1987; DeLanda 2006). Delanda (2006) has strenuously argued for the abandonment of understanding of social entities and ‘natural’ forms in terms of totality or essence, positing rather that such social and organic things are historically wrought assemblages, center-less and with aggregate margins.

While the meanings and modes of objects and objects-human interactions, and their accessibility to study, have been extensively discussed, in archaeological practice the ‘assemblage’ as such remains largely uninterrogated. The term indicates a group of objects found already-brought-together, representing the “sum of human activities” long-since concluded (Renfrew and Bahn 2008, 578). Recent conceptual approaches to the archaeological assemblage have led to increasing debate over the ways in which archaeologists make meaning from groups of objects and on the ways in which archaeological truth is itself an assemblage of practitioners, objects, and knowledges (Harris 2012; Fowler 2013; Pauketat 2013). Many of these approaches have been focused on addressing the utility of typologies or the ontological resilience of categories deployed by archaeologists to describe the past: grave, household, community, etc. While archaeologists may debate the accuracy of many

of their techniques of knowing, the collection or collectivization of objects – on the page, on the museum shelf, on the table – often remains *a priori* to discussion. We would suggest persistently incomplete archaeologies form alignments between assemblage theories and science studies, and between structural approaches to meaning making and Heideggerian concepts of meaning-becoming/revealing (Heidegger 1977; 2008). In an approach that centered on the “uneasy flicker” between Things in the world and Objects of study, Knappett (2011) issued a methodological challenge to archaeologists to likewise grapple with (but not resolve) the tension within sets of things, persons, and relationships between determinacy (networks) and untangled uncertainty (meshworks). We and the contributors to this volume respond by bringing archaeology to bear on the friability and porosity of assembled totalities, with the most susceptible of such totalities being the science of archaeology and the “facts” that it produces.

Incomplete Archaeologies is a collection of studies of assembling, processes through which pasts, truths, totalities, and facts are revealed as fundamentally unfinished, ongoing and ever in the process of becoming. In focusing resolutely on the verb form of *assemble* we build from arguments which posit action or motion fundamental to the praxis of social agency, specifically as regards the bringing-into-relation of persons, places, objects and temporalities (Munn 1986; Johnson 2006; Ingold 2007; Pauketat 2013; Franklin and Johnson n.d.; Johnson forthcoming). This pragmatic, pluralistic approach entails a determined consideration of the contingencies which are co-produced with and which may dis- or reassemble vulnerable and/or venerable ‘truths,’ on which we have long depended (Heidegger 1977; 2008).

Assembling and meaning making

The first step of this work is interrogating and un-making the apparent totality of things in the world, and weakening the ironclad spatial and temporal boundedness of meaningful assemblages. This unraveling is a common (if nonetheless problematic) occurrence. First, a few examples.

In the spring of 2010, a strange conversation was happening among the industrial ruins of Detroit, MI. The strangeness of the conversation arose from its subject: the nature of ‘art’ and the location of art as a quality in relation to single objects, spaces, people, and landscapes. The impetus for this conversation, which was carried out in the streets and in various Internet forums, was the sudden absence of an art object from the landscape of urban Detroit. A week prior, the graffiti-*auteur* Banksy, famous for wry works of social commentary which make deft use of found surfaces and contexts, had tagged a remnant standing wall in a relatively open section of Detroit’s derelict Packard plant. Banksy’s work was a stenciled image of a young, somewhat discontented boy holding a can of red paint, juxtaposed with the words, scrawled in red paint: “I remember when all this was trees” (Stryker 2010a). The figure-ground tension of the painted words juxtaposed with the stenciled boy was paralleled in the Banksy ‘installation’ by the juxtaposition of deliberate, composed artwork with actively collapsing architecture, chaotic rubble and layers of discarded refuse. The conversation that “ignited” in Detroit in May 2010 was not centered on the particulars of Banksy’s composition – for instance, on how it situated the viewer as gazing upon the

painted figure, whose own gaze was directed not back at the viewer but to the side, drawing the Packard site into a dialectic of representation, produced space and spatial memory. Instead, the attention of online commentators, reporters, and Michigan inhabitants within a wide radius of downtown Detroit was focused on how only a few days after the discovery of the Banksy piece a group of artist-activists from the 555 Nonprofit Studio/Gallery removed the “endangered” mural, cutting out the section of cinderblock wall on which the figure and words had been painted, and transported them to a local gallery (Bandle *et al.*). Ten days after the removal, the gallery withdrew the mural from its display location in their gallery due to threats and “worrisome internet chatter” (Stryker 2010b). The artists-curators at 555 Studio defended the removal of the wall from the perspective that they were preserving an art object for the enjoyment of all, “preserved as social commentary for years to come” (DETROITFUNK 2010).

But as people – including one of the authors (KF) – continued to roam the “Banksy area” of the Packard site, interacting with the architectural remains, discarded televisions, and spontaneous rubble fires that had returned the sidelong gaze of Banksy’s painted figure and served as the counterpoint to the thinly veiled critique in the red-painted text, a discourse emerged according to which the curators had in fact destroyed the piece, which had lost its context and meaning once it was removed from the precarious conditions of the Packard ruins. In preserving and in many ways reifying the ‘art object’ – the rectangular mural, consolidated and permanent – the curator-thieves had unmade the artwork as an ongoing assembly of crumbling ruins, shifting deposits of junk, and viewers passing in variable states of trespass on the private property of the site.

The example of “I remember when all this was trees” is interesting to us because it demonstrates the immediate and sometimes violent ways in which the *work* of art resisted being easily bounded within an art *object* – even when boundaries were cut with saws, chisels, and hammers, in an attempt to excise and distill the meaning of art from material, spatial and temporal relationships. Moving in the other direction, we are also deeply interested in instances where an analytical object is itself unmade, even while the boundaries of an apparent assemblage are scrupulously maintained. In this case, an example is provided by a box of rocks in the first-floor storage at the Cambridge University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (CUMAA). A collection of chocolate-brown and soft gray flint nodules, the rocks are each inked with an accession number and nestled in a fitted tray, in the same fashion as the Acheulian and Gravettian tools in the boxes ranged around them on the shelves. But the rocks that concern us are not ‘real’ ancient tools: they are eoliths, stones worn and chipped by retreating glaciers into forms which resembled human-made tools to turn-of-the-century antiquarians (Franklin 2006). The fine line between stone-working resulting from an accident of nature and from the human genius was made even finer by the enthusiasm of collectors eager to find a British hominid that pre-dated the Paleolithic toolmakers of Europe and Asia (Reader 1988). The eoliths as a ‘fact’ about the human past were eventually ‘unmade,’ along with other likewise susceptible assemblings of flints, bones, and nationalist aspirations – such as *eoanthropus dawsoni* or the “Piltdown Man” (Moir 1919, 65). Though the facticity of the eoliths as an assembled knowledge-object about the human past was sundered by tensions between human and non-human (glacial) agency, and by reconfigured notions of authenticity in British archaeology, the eolith assemblage endures, preserved by the curatorial policies of the CUMAA. Maintained, locked in cataloged

relationships with plaster casts of blade-tools and boxes of ‘authentic’ prehistoric axes, the collection of eoliths challenges the apparent seamlessness of this assemblage by pulling all sorts of unwieldy objects – the unreality of stark human-nature distinctions, the fallibility and political susceptibility of archaeologists – into an ongoing assembling of knowledge-objects pertaining to the study of the deep human past. This apparent contradiction – between the unmaking of fact and the apparent persistence of assemblage – puts into relief the deceptive nature of the presumed solidity of assemblages.

As the case of Banksy’s ‘mural’ centered on a tension between the art work and the art object, the cohesion of the eoliths as an assemblage (both with each other and with other ancient human-made stone tools) hangs on a tension between the analytical definition of ‘objects of study’ and the seemingly ontological definition ‘object of antiquity.’ As illustrated in the case of the eoliths, knowledge production about the latter (as in the case of the authenticity of religious relics, of the personal effects displayed in state funerals) is not only subject to political debate, but is constructed through politically invested processes. As this volume sets out to explore, these processes are undertaken in and through time, and should be conceptualized as incomplete, in that they never achieved a state of total finality that cannot be undone, unsewn, or unmade by further acts, reconfigurations, and assemblings.

What emerges is a growing, unsettling sense that the ‘things’ which constitute reality, the objects that concern us and the issues at hand, are material, but very frequently are also discursive, spatial, relational, and temporal. Their thingness is aggregate, partable, and fissive, as are the arguments pinned to them and the spaces they co-constitute. If archaeology is a study of the long-term interaction of persons with things, then archaeology’s object of study is not the reliably inert assemblage but the slippery, contingent and often contradictory *assembling*.

The contributions to this volume originate from various investigative perspectives and articulate with myriad discussions in other disciplines and sub-fields. It is also possible to follow a number of common threads through the ideas presented in the following chapters, which weave together more general areas of concern – that is, denser knots of “concept” (Latour 1999, 106) which orient our in-process understanding of assembling.

Assembling in space and time

This emphasis on assembling is a practical challenge to ourselves to engage with the different spatial and temporal scales over which past actors or processes assembled the material and immaterial relationships we study. In considering the socially productive potential of mobility and its roles in assembling, we have been looking to move beyond how things/goods/objects are moved or how subjects are or become mobile (e.g., Urry 2007), and to think about the ways in which people encounter or engender social meaning in the practice of moving. Mobility and assembling are linked concepts, through analysis both of the ways in which arguments about power are collected within particular movements like dancing or immigration (Creswell 2006), and of the fundamental restlessness by which mobile subjects assemble, disassemble and/or reassemble discourses and objects at differing scales and distances in order to construct their daily actions and arguments (Levi-Strauss 1966; Anderson 1983). Within these assemblings we bring together diverse datasets at various scales, engaging with social production in the past in various intersecting, contingent registers. Following from the starting point of this discussion, that archaeology would be

better served to think beyond the assemblage inert end-result only, we are actively exploring the implications of assembling for considerations of time and temporality as active and dynamic aspects of social practice.

Ongoing discourses within archaeology have stressed the essential and contingent temporality of objects-of-study like landscape, meaning that such entities are time-deep and time-dependent (Ingold 1993; Bradley 1998; Barrett 1999). In Chapter 6 of this volume, Chang and Beardmore encompass large and small scales in an examination of the ways in which the lifeways of Iron Age agropastoralists assembled within the floors and walls of mudbrick dwellings. Their discussion ranges also to enframe archaeological analysis and its practices of collapsing space and time within microscopic data, or eliding them altogether in expanses of crumbling mud. Their discussion resonates with that of Chazin in Chapter 3: Chazin's concern is with the 'life assemblage,' the population of living animals tethered by analytical ties to assemblages of zooarchaeological data. Of particular interest to Chazin is the (often invisible, unconscious) way that particular spaces, times and discourses are also bundled together with the life assemblage, specifically objects like nature and culture, mobility and politics. In Chapter 2, Miller Bonney examines the time-depth and aggregation of the Bronze Age landscape of Crete. Miller Bonney juxtaposes the long-term processes and practices by which tholos tombs were assembled within the hillscape with both the processes of disassembly and decay which have affected the tombs over time, and the ways in which their contents, forms and spatial imaginaries have been re-assembled by archaeologists, historians and museum curators. These chapters represent an attempt to respond to calls that archaeology participate in the wider anthropological negotiation of multiple and alternative temporalities, and contend with the ramifications of transformative and potentially contradictory ideas of time (Munn 1986; Dawdy 2010).

Assembling the body

The contributions to this volume that deal with burial and the body give us the opportunity to work with tensions in burial analysis between event and process, and to discuss the assembling of burial goods as active and ongoing rather than final and complete. The excavated assemblage might then be considered not just the result of a series of actions surrounding burial but also in terms of the ways that the bringing together of objects incorporates memory and commemorates the body (Hamilakis *et al.* 2002; Williams 2003; Fowler 2004; Sofaer 2006; Tarlow 2011). The foundation for such interrogations was laid by archaeologists interested in the degree to which the relational nature of objects, or groups of objects, could be directly or indirectly related to socio-economic and political phenomena visible in mortuary practices, i.e., status, gender, etc. (Parker Pearson 1999; Arnold 2006). We would like, for example, to think about burial hoards in a mode similar to Mark Sandberg's (2003) analysis of the modern (18–19th century) European wax museum. Sandberg makes a compelling historical argument for embodiment as a painstaking practice of assembling. The objects assembled to embody the subjects of modern European exhibitions included not only material indices of corporeality such as death masks or 'real' hair, but also arguments for co-presence in the form of a tableau of assembled 'authentic' personal effects and artifacts of the life and death of the embodied. The wax museum case opens the floor to re-conceptualizing other practices that use assembling to negotiate the tensions between bodies that are too present, and those that resist sufficient corporeality. Gonzalez'

(Chapter 8) discussion of Gustav Vasa's curated body highlights how the 'body sovereign' coalesces as a network of historical and material projects. In a similar mode, Franklin in her discussion (Chapter 9) explores the entanglement of princely bodies, architecture and epigraphic assemblage. In Chapter 5, Frie examines Early Iron burial contexts containing 'commingled' humans, animals, and objects featuring combined human and animal imagery. Frie's chapter discussion produces a conceptualization of the Iron Age interred body as itself a commingling, an assembling across apparent ontological lines. In Chapter 7 Garstki situates the identity of ironsmiths in Iron Age Ireland at the intersection of skilled bodies, technological apparatus, and the temporalities of specialist performance. Critically, Garstki argues that the ironsmith is always a body moving forward in time, his identity an incomplete assemblage of material capacities and expected production.

Assembling the collection

Museum collections generally are rich fields for discussions of the social power of assembling, and the capacity of materials and spaces to be transformed from projects or arguments into naturalized facts. Theorists of the museum have commented on the power of the 'museum way of seeing' to transform practical or in-process objects into singular works of art by removing them from one context and placing them in another: the context of spotlight, pedestal, and vitrine (Alpers 1991). Similarly, archaeological museums represent the ongoing, discursive practices of assembling by which archaeologists construct meaning about the past as frozen moments of reified decisiveness: clear dating, absolute identifications, boldly demarcated culture areas and historical narratives (Franklin 2006). As archaeologists working with museum collections and in a historical relationship with the practices of museum collection, we are consistently interested in museums as case studies in the ways that social meaning is actively, contingently assembled at the intersection of space, collapsed/invoked distance and discourses: from the assembling of awe at the Metropolitan, of scientific reverence at the Museum of Surgical Science in Chicago, or the mutual assembling of things and people at the Pitt Rivers Museum (cf. Gosden *et al.* 2007), to name but a tiny sample. In Chapter 8, Gonzalez examines the assembly of bodies, sovereignty and nation within the tomb and chapel of Gustav Vasa at Uppsala Cathedral in Sweden. Following the selective preservation, construction and display of the bodies of King Gustav Vasa and his wives, Gonzalez follows how not only a grave, but also a national memory and sovereign narrative are painstakingly curated. Franklin's discussion of 'assembling subjects' in Chapter 9 centers on the question of how this practice of careful assembling and care, of objects, spaces and histories, is critical to the construction of the legible worlds within which actors situate their social agency. Franklin compares case studies from the 'early modern' collections of courtly scientist Ulisse Aldrovandi, to the collected personas of 20th century fine artists, and the worlds of authority assembled by merchant princes in late medieval Armenia.

Political assemblings

In 1991 Nicholas Thomas posited *entangling* as a way of conceptually bracketing power struggles, gaps in signification and value, and the sometimes violent contingencies which come into play when objects of material culture are moved over great distances and across cultural contexts. Thomas' account of the material ramifications of British colonial encounters in the South Pacific described specific instances in which objects – war clubs, black glass

bottles – were assembled and re-assembled in projects on both sides of the encounter. Since Thomas's work, entanglement has been cited as an explanatory mechanism in archaeology, though frequently lacking in discussion of both active agency and contingency (Alexander 1998; Jordan 2009; but for fuller discussion see Ingold 2007; Hodder 2012). Believing that archaeology does not need another passive black-box term to explain cultural change, we hope to discuss the practices of *political assembling* (objects, people, spaces, discourses) that co-occur with different scales of contingent entangling that underlie narratives like colonialism, crusade, or globalism (Appadurai 1996; 2000; Tsing 2000; 2004; Dietler 2010). In Chapter 1 Cobb approaches the Mesolithic period in the Southern Hebrides from a perspective of assembling with the intent to therefore invest the people of that period with a politics rather than the bare subsistence they have generally been attributed. From an examination of a single pit, Cobb builds an analysis of the multiscalar arguments for relationship, proximity and distance assembled and situated by the inhabitants of Staosnaig. Cobb's recuperation of politics to hazelnuts parallels the work undertaken by Chazin in Chapter 3 to reassert the politics always already present in the concept of the 'life assemblage,' and obscured by the empirical priorities of archaeological method. Frie's discussion of human-animal assemblages in the Iron Age turns from the construction of the buried individual to the practice of citation, by which future social practice refers back to that buried assemblage and further entangles it in practice and memory. Johnson's chapter (4) explores the assembling of and movement through mortuary landscapes in the European Iron Age as acts of identification and miniaturization. Johnson contends that late Hallstatt/early La Tène Iron Age burials were assembled as successively miniaturized political architecture crafted to convey and reinforce existing sociological ordering as populations moved from the gigantic world of the living to the miniaturized, and politically steeped, world of the dead. In this way the assembled dead continue to be implicated in and agents of the politics of the living.

Assembling in (and of) the past

Our aim is to substantially further a discursive movement away from normative conceptualizations of assemblages that have long acted as placeholders for past action, mobility and community, towards an examination of the movements of things themselves, acts of assembling, and reconsideration of things susceptible to being assembled. We consider not only objects but techniques – systems of practice – discourses, and landscapes. We are particularly interested in how the bringing together of objects and discourses (histories, ecological narratives, political and social philosophies) is itself a creative and ongoing act of assembling. This interest applies not only to the subjects and practices of archaeological analysis (like typology, or meaningful types like 'stone tools') but to the ways in which people in the past made social sense through objects and landscapes, as well as the ways in which actors (like the art-lovers of Detroit) continue to make meaning of the past, present and future through assembling, disassembling, and re-assembling.

The chapter discussions that follow move in various ways beyond static notions of the assemblage, drawing on archaeology's time-deep objects of concern to more fully explore ongoing practices of assembling which are fundamental to being a subject in social worlds.

We envision assembling as an active process and place it center stage in discussions about practices that produce social meaning, either intentionally or unintentionally, and in ways that are always subject to and intervening within differentiations of power in the social field. Assembling is always already political, and politics could be approached as a series of ongoing acts of assembling negotiated and renegotiated through different spacetimes. This is nowhere more pertinent than in the ongoing assembly of archaeological knowledge from things, humans, and discourses about life in the past. Central to our movement towards archaeologies of incompleteness is that the ideas of assembling constructed over the following pages remain open and continue to permutate and ramify, as a persistently incomplete approach to meaning in the past.

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1.

Why the Mesolithic needs assemblages

Hannah Cobb

In studies of prehistoric hunter-gatherers we are faced with a fundamental problem; we know that these were mobile people, who likely moved over large distances, but the material we excavate comes from static sites. How then can we build an understanding of such mobile lifeways from the material we have? In this paper I will present a case study that speaks to the (surprising) mobility of these people. The deposition at Staosnaig of nearly 50,000 pieces of chipped stone, 67 stone artefacts, 18 bone fragments, 23 pieces of pumice, and the fragments of 30,000–60,000 charred hazelnut shells (estimated as the residue remaining from the roasting of between 120,000 and 330,000 hazelnuts) at the site of what had been a hut challenges our conceptions of Mesolithic mobility. Based upon the likely sources for these diverse materials, I will argue that we can begin to reconceive hunter-gatherer sites not as static, fixed points, but as an enmeshed part of the never complete assemblages that comprised hunter gatherer prehistoric daily life. In the process we also will discover that the evidence is not as static as we may first think.

KEYWORDS: MESOLITHIC, HUNTER-GATHERER

Who did Mesolithic people have relationships with?

In 1984 Richard Bradley wrote that “successful farmers have social relations with one another, while hunter-gatherers have ecological relations with hazelnuts” (Bradley 1984, 11). This quotation has often been drawn upon to make the argument that we need to change the way we approach the Mesolithic and consider social relations in the period (eg. most recently Finlay 2014, 1192). And after 30 years of robust debate, it is fair to say that there is a strong body of work which does seek to conceptualize the Mesolithic in exactly these kinds of ways. Feminism and Queer theory (Schmidt 2000, 2005; Strassburg 2000; Cobb 2005), perspectivism (Conneller 2004; 2005; 2011; Boric 2005), and more broadly personhood studies (Finlay 2000; 2003; 2006; 2014; Fowler 2004), as well as phenomenology (Cobb 2008; 2009; 2013; 2014), landscape studies (Cummings 2003) and more (e.g. see

papers in Conneller and Warren 2006) have helped in no small part to create a series of understandings of the Mesolithic, particularly in the UK and Ireland, that are strongly influenced by, and indeed part of the Post-Processual paradigm. Such approaches have, then, emancipated Mesolithic people from narratives in which they only had ecological relations with hazelnuts. With this in mind, in this paper I want to do something that may seem at first to undermine this forward march of Post-Processual Mesolithic studies: I want to return to the relationships between people and hazelnuts.

My argument here, however, does not seek to plunge us back into a world where we only envisage relationships between Mesolithic people and hazelnuts, or even their environments, in the deterministic manner that was originally implied by Bradley (1984). Rather I want to ontologically repurpose those hazelnuts, and indeed those Mesolithic people too. Returning to the Bradley quote that “successful farmers have social relations with one another, while hunter-gatherers have ecological relations with hazelnuts” (Bradley 1984, 11), a key point to this statement, whether intentional or not, is that people, and their social relations with one another, are most important; they are ontologically prior. Ecological relations, with hazelnuts or otherwise, are secondary, with people either affecting ecologies, or being determined by them. However it is framed, the implication is still the same: that such relations between people and environment are not as rich as those social relations that existed between people. It is this point that this paper seeks to challenge by exploring the active, ongoing and dynamic assembling of people and hazelnuts in ways that constantly created meaning.

To rethink Mesolithic people, and Mesolithic hazelnuts, therefore, I want to turn to Manuel Delanda’s interpretation of assemblage theory (DeLanda 2006) which has its roots in the work of Deleuze and Guattari (1987), and crucially begins with a flat ontology. This is important because the ontological repositioning that this approach provides means that we can start thinking through the relationships between people and their material worlds in the Mesolithic in very different terms. In this approach people are not ontologically prior to anything else, instead people and hazelnuts are immediately placed on an equal footing, and their relationships are of equal value. But beyond this, drawing upon DeLanda’s concern with the manner in which assemblages of collective entities are continually in emergence, we can begin to further examine how Mesolithic assemblages were constantly becoming, and how Mesolithic people were constantly assembling and re-assembling their world. Further, because a central tenet of Delanda’s argument is that such assemblages are not simply reducible to their parts, but are defined through their relations of exteriority (DeLanda 2006, 11) – that is the relations between different assemblages – we can use the material record to examine the many components of Mesolithic assemblages and explore their potency and affect when combined as assemblages and disclosed against other assemblages. Importantly such accounts need not remain ahistorical. Critically DeLanda develops assemblage theory to explore and account for aspects such as historicity in the way in which assemblages continue to emerge. Gavin Lucas (2012, 199–200) provides an excellent short summary of the key tenets:

The stability of any assemblage is determined by twin processes [or axes, as DeLanda would have it] of territorialization and deterritorialization on the one hand, and by coding and/or decoding on the other hand. For example, a building acting as a meeting place helps stabilize an assemblage such as a religious ceremony (e.g. Sunday service) through territorialization. Similarly the use of language and texts (e.g. prayers, hymn books) also helps stabilize this assemblage through coding.

I suggest, then, that if we adopt assemblage theory as a framework for examining the Mesolithic we begin to open up a number of possibilities for the kind of narratives of the Mesolithic that we can tell. Here we can consider the many relationships between people, places, animals, plants, trees, stone, and more, and examine their implications for the experience of the Mesolithic world. In this way the humble hazelnut, or any other material element in the Mesolithic, is able to take center stage without such narratives falling victim to ecological determinism. At the same time such approaches are able to shift our focus from anthropocentric accounts of the period to narratives which may be closer to the more relational understandings of the world that ethnographic accounts indicate are likely to have existed in the Mesolithic.

A nutty example

This argument is best developed through a case study, and given the quotation with which this paper began it seems appropriate to use an example where hazelnuts are a notable component of the site. Staosnaig, a late Mesolithic site from the island of Colonsay, in the Inner Hebrides, western Scotland, is therefore a perfect case study. This site was excavated in the early '90s (Mithen and Finlay 2000, 359) as part of the Southern Hebrides Mesolithic Project, and has produced a date range between 7330–6910 cal BC and 6020–5780 cal BC (Mithen and Finlay 2000, 373). The site comprised a range of pit features and some lithic scatter activity, and of particular note there is a large sub-circular pit, labelled F24 and measuring 4.5m in diameter, with an average depth of 30–40cm, extending “into a deeper circular cut of 1.8m diameter at the eastern edge” (Mithen and Finlay 2000, 378). This, the excavators have suggested, represents what was originally a hut or structure. However at some point this structure was not only taken out of conventional use, but was rapidly filled with a deposit containing nearly 50,000 pieces of chipped stone, 67 stone artefacts, 18 bone fragments, 23 pieces of pumice, and the fragments of 30,000–60,000 charred hazelnut shells (estimated as the residue remaining from the roasting of between 120,000 and 330,000 hazelnuts) (Mithen and Finlay 2000, 378–83, 410). The excavators describe this deposit as being homogeneous and lacking horizontal patterning amongst the many artefacts present, which in turn has led them to suggest that this deposit represented one very major and significant act of rapid infilling (Mithen and Finlay 2000, 432).

This archaeological assemblage is clearly remarkable. Indeed the excavators have suggested that the vast quantities of hazelnut shells found in the fill of F24 pit may represent the possible harvest of at least 500 hazel trees (Mithen and Finlay 2000, 435). This scale of activity needs no theoretical framework for us to recognise it as undoubtedly significant in and of itself. However if we start to examine this site through the lens of assemblage theory, we can explore some of the many different assemblages represented in this deposit to illuminate and articulate its significance even further. Taking this approach allows a consideration of the continual actions of assembling and reassembling at this site, enabling us to reframe the relationship between people and hazelnuts here very explicitly.

If we begin with F24 itself as an assemblage, both in the archaeological sense and the sense meant by Deleuze and Guattari and DeLanda, we can explore a range of things, or

residues of things (*sensu* Lucas 2012), that reveal this feature itself was a series of intertwining assemblages. In its first phase, F24 was originally a hut or similar structure. The assemblage of the hut comprised the locale in which it was constructed (the land, the turf, or otherwise) which was chosen specifically by the people who constructed it, although perhaps the place chose them. The proximity to the coast, to a river running down to the sea, the extensive visibility across the sea to the islands of Jura and Islay, and the mainland beyond – these factors or more may all have congealed to make this place significant for otherwise mobile populations, affecting them and gathering them to this place, to build a more permanent hut structure here. As these people cleared the space, gathered the wood for the posts and prepared the turf or the skins for its covering, each of these materials would have acted back on them. The ground may have been hard to cut or strip, or conversely a mossy surface, soft and appealing. The posts would have bent and arched under the pressure of their bindings forcing them into one single structure, and in turn the people in the structure would have changed or adapted how they chose to construct it (*sensu* Ingold 2000). The journeys to collect the posts, the processes to hunt and then prepare skins or gather turf to cover the structure, and the people that contributed to its construction, all came from other locations, and other assemblages, and were territorialized here, in this assemblage of F24-as-hut. After it was finally constructed, the threads of other assemblages would have been woven into this site; social rules about who could have used the structure, where the fire should be sited, what food may be consumed or where tools could be made would all have coded and further territorialized the assemblage of F24-as-hut.

In its first phase of use, F24 was a site for assembling: assembling social groups and social rules, of this place and others, firmly territorialized. As a composite of assemblages it was never truly completed because its purpose was always being fulfilled and reframed for the next iteration of activity. This is made more explicit when we consider F24 in its final phase. This seems, on initial analysis, to be a very different assemblage: a seemingly simple, singular assemblage comprising a huge, single act of deposition into the wide, shallow scoop left by the fall of feet from another time, another assemblage. However if we turn to the contents of this deposit we can suggest that a very different type of assembling occurred.

It could be suggested that the contents of the final, homogeneous deposit in F24 required the mixing and bringing together of materials which themselves were from assemblages of alterity, assemblages of *different* materials from *other* locations, likely to have been gathered some distance from the site, beyond the shores of Colonsay. The 50,000 pieces of chipped stone recovered from the deposit, for instance, included materials likely to be from Jura, as well as pitchstone from the Isle of Arran (Mithen and Finlay 2000, 394). Similarly the pumice at the site has been identified as deriving from Icelandic and Norwegian sources (Mithen and Finlay 2000, 404) and must have been found either on the beach or floating within the sea, as people fished or made journeys over to Colonsay. Finally the nearly quarter of a million hazelnuts the roasting of which produced the charred shells in the deposit are residues themselves from a series of complicated assemblages. It is likely that these hazelnuts came from both Colonsay and elsewhere, thus mirroring the chipped stone and pumice in the distances that they had traveled, brought to the island from across the sea. But they may also have comprised assemblages of alterity in other ways. For instance the hazel trees from which they derived formed a different kind of architecture (cf. McFadyen 2006), structures that sheltered, constrained and enabled movement in very different ways

from those in F24-as-hut. Here then, the act of collecting these nuts, the physicality of this process, and then of bringing them to or across Colonsay, the act of making a large fire, of sustaining this whilst roasting and consuming them, or dividing up such a huge harvest, all are part of multiple assemblages. Before they were even deposited in F24 the hazelnut shells had been part of the territorializing and deterritorializing of a series of assemblages from different, and likely spatially and conceptually distant places. Brought into the mixture, the cauldron of F24, then, these hazelnuts must have thus have resonated with a power in themselves from the multiple other assemblages of which they had been part. They would have been a truly vibrant material (*sensu* Bennett 2010).

The mixing of materials, the stark and powerful assemblage of alterity in F24-as-final-filled-pit, would have contrasted with the very pit itself which was a space worn from the foot fall of its previous occupants, from when this was a place of assembling congealed through F24-as-shelter. Of course F24 was always a place of reassembling, but in the last acts that we can recognize, archaeologically, in the feature, F24-as-final-filled-pit was reordered in a way that contrasted notably with what had been before. It could be regarded as an explicit deterritorialization on the one hand, in turn territorializing and recreating this site as something else – a new, potent assemblage marking this place out as one spatially connected to the wider world, and chronologically connected to the past and the future, in a way it had not been before, and in a way that changed how it would be used or regarded by its occupants. At the heart of this process was its historicity. It was re-territorialized as an assemblage which made sense precisely because of what had gone before, both here and elsewhere, and which would have resonance into future assemblages for exactly these reasons.

Who didn't Mesolithic people have relationships with?

This is a paper as much about the Mesolithic in the past as it is about the approaches we use to assemble the Mesolithic in the present. As noted above, much has been done to develop Post-Processual narratives of the period, and thirty years on, the original point of Bradley's hazelnut quotation, to suggest a need for realigning our studies of this period with more socially situated narratives of the past, has been met with some vigour. But to continue this vigour, I argue that the Mesolithic needs assemblage theory. The account of events at Staosnaig provides a rich example of the efficacy of this approach, and there are a series of further implications from examining this site (and any other Mesolithic site) using assemblage theory.

The first is of course that it illuminates the multiple scales (both spatially and temporally) of complicated material interaction in the Mesolithic. In this way we can move beyond the obvious (i.e. that this site represents a phenomenal act of hazelnut collecting, roasting and deposition) to think about how assemblages of hazel trees, people, nuts, burning, roasting and deposition entwined with other spatial assemblages of which other materials and people were part. We may then think about how these various assemblages, reterritorialized in this place, could have given the place itself significance. Elsewhere archaeologists have recognised that the late Mesolithic represents a move towards greater adherence to certain locales through the construction of huts (Wickham Jones 2004; Waddington 2007) and middens (Cummings

2003; Cobb 2008) but of course these are permanent, upstanding structures – it is easier to see how people made places at such locales. In contrast using an assemblage approach to think through Staosnaig enables us to think through the multiple acts of assembling that might have made places special beyond the more traditional modes of place building that we are familiar with in farming economies. Thus it enables us to examine how significance is created in the Mesolithic without extrapolating back from practices we observe in more recent prehistory (cf. Cobb 2013).

Crucially it also allows us to capture mobility. This has often been a quandary in Mesolithic studies (although cf. Kador 2005; 2007a; 2007b for an interesting approach to counter this), where our accounts of the period are necessarily site-based, in turn producing a very static narrative of a period that was characterized by fluidity and movement. Thinking here about the ways that the mixtures of people, things and practices were entwined in the rhythms of daily life, and what and how this disclosed the world, provides a view that is mobile – in which journeys over the sea, the movement of the hunt and the times spent sitting, static by a fire, are all incorporated.

Finally this approach does one further thing. It enables us to think about the affects of the various material components of Mesolithic life, just as much as it does the people present in these assemblages, and all on an equal footing. Of course this is not new. Animal affects have been eloquently explored in exactly these terms for Mesolithic studies (Conneller 2004; 2011; Boric 2005) for some time, and Mesolithic studies are much the richer for these. But the approach advocated here shifts our focus fundamentally, not just to one category of material interaction in the Mesolithic, but to all that we can observe in the archaeological record. Thus the question is no longer one of whether Mesolithic people had relationships with hazelnuts, or one another, or anything else, but *how* the various material and social dimensions of all of Mesolithic life intersected in assemblages at different scales. Thinking in these terms allows us to examine how assemblages both congealed and were torn apart, how they were reconfigured elsewhere, how they drew upon one another and created new assemblages, which were all the more charged, resonant, or vibrant, as Bennett (2010) would have it, from their connection with assemblages past and present. This approach leaves the question of whether hunter-gatherers had relationships with hazelnuts or one another as redundant. The question assemblage theory enables us to pose instead is “who didn’t Mesolithic people have relationships with?” and to explore the complexity of those interactions in a nuanced and less anthropocentric manner.

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2.

Reassembling Early Bronze Age tombs on Crete

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This paper explores the ways in which knowledge about the Cretan Prepalatial tombs has been assembled both by the academy and by the public. On the one hand scholars have dealt with the tombs as static receptacles for bodies and grave goods not as active participants in the mortuary process and the sustaining of community. The local citizenry while they have more actual physical contact with the tombs do not and cannot really understand the archaeological background for these mostly fragmentary monuments. They know them only materially. A close examination of the assemblings and reassembling at the cemetery of Lebena Yerokambos seeks a middle route that acknowledges the materiality of the tholoi and the possibilities for human engagement over their long history.

KEYWORDS: BRONZE AGE, CRETE, THOLOS

Introduction

The papers in this volume challenge traditional understandings of the archaeological assemblage as a bounded and completed entity. Provoked (in part) by recent efforts to topple that conceptual framework (Hodder 2012; Lucas 2012; Alberti *et al.* 2013; Fowler 2013a; 2013b) the authors turn to notions of incompleteness and assembling: re-framing the mortuary sphere as an extension of bureaucratic activity (Johnson this volume), destabilizing static narratives of Mesolithic people as merely a subsistence population (Cobb this volume) or revealing the repeated remaking of the monarch (Gonzalez this volume). Acknowledging the instability and contingency of the material world (*sensu* Barad 2003; 2007; Bennett 2010) the authors focus on processes and the interactions between people and things.

The epistemological consequences of this dynamic approach are critical as the papers demonstrate, and it is to this tack that this paper turns. The aim of the chapter is to reinstate the human presence at Early Bronze Age (3100–1900 BCE) Cretan tombs thereby restoring their actual history as sites of social encounter and meaning making and reinvigorating monuments that for too long have been treated as static containers. The site of Lebena



Fig. 2.1. Archaeological fence and sign at Lebena Yerokambos

Yerokambos (Yerokambos) near modern Lentas on the south coast of Crete embodies the problem. Its sturdy if not always impregnable Greek Archaeological Service fence and brown sign with yellow lettering (Figs 2.1 and 2.2) identify the site as an established monument, a “Bronze Age Tholos Tomb,” a contained (protected) and excavated archaeological site that has not served a mortuary purpose for nearly 4000 years and yet is still a tomb. The implied durability is belied (Fig. 2.3) by the structure’s contingency: aggressive grasses shooting their destructive roots into slowly deteriorating walls; bits of rock tumble on the tomb’s interior floor; fragments of plastic debris left by intruders on the site; the stubs of anterooms lost long before the site was excavated; the steady if slow disassembling and reassembling of the monument into an irregular landscape feature. Resolving the apparent conflict between the two requires recognition of the recursive relationship between people, tomb and grave goods as producing and products of each other.

Achieving this is critical for the larger category to which this cemetery belongs, long frozen in time by the academics and misunderstood by the modern population. The cemetery at Yerokambos comprises two tombs that are among the 58 extant examples of the tholos, a circular stone built collective tomb characteristic of the Cretan Prepalatial period (3100–1900 BCE), spanning the Early Bronze Age (EBA) and extending into the beginning of the Middle Bronze Age (MBA) (Manning 2010, 14, 23). Until recently Prepalatial settlements, other than the major sites of Knossos and Phaistos, were sparse so the tholoi and their contents provided most of the information for the process by which the Cretan landscape, once dotted with egalitarian hamlets and villages, came to be dominated by hierarchically ordered cities. The pottery, seals and other objects deposited in the tombs revealed the emergence of craft



Fig. 2.2. Archaeological sign at Lebena Yerokambos



Fig. 2.3. Lebena Yerokambos Detail

specialization, social differentiation and other indicia of complexity associated with elite presence and action behind this transformation (Branigan 1970; 1993; 1998; Soles 1992; Murphy 1998; 2011; Panagiotopoulos 2002; Legarra Herrero 2009; 2011; 2014) while the increasingly complex floor plans alluded to social stratification and control of access. Absent from these conversations was any reference to the materiality of the tombs themselves, aside from Papadopoulos's (2010) computer reconstruction of Tholos C and Burial Building 19, the occasional excavation report photograph, and rare references to the size of the stones (Branigan 1993; Legarra Herrero 2012).

Thus the tombs' assertive materiality may surprise the visitor who knows them only from the literature (Figs 2.4 and 2.5). Yet each tomb emerged from a series of community decisions on the location, construction, and the use, re-use, modification and ultimate abandonment all producing material effects. Subsequent choices by looters, archaeologists and local farmers building walls and clearing fields have produced what remains today. In each case the assembling of the things and the people produced a particular meaning that appeared to define the result – tomb under construction, tomb in use, abandoned tomb, looted tomb, preserved tomb, *trokhaloi* (pile of rubble) – but was in fact also subject to change as the structure was always drawn into the present. Any effort to use the tombs as a vehicle for creating knowledge about Prepalatial Crete must include consideration of this essential materiality.

This is so because engaging with and acknowledging the architectural reality of the tomb allows us to transcend the traditional epistemologies and to see the Prepalatial tomb as a commemorative site that always was becoming through the actions of the users. Recent scholarship demands that we direct attention to the material world and the intra-action (*sensu* Barad 2007) between people and things (e.g. Jones 2007; 2012; Webmoor 2007; Witmore 2007; Webmoor and Witmore 2008; Bennet 2010; Knappett 2011; Johansen 2012; Lucas 2012; Alberti *et al.* 2013; Fowler 2013a; 2013b; Malafouris 2013). These assertions reflect the recognition of the materiality of the mind (e.g. Clark 2001; 2008; Noe 2009) and the impact of notions of material agency (Latour 2005; Knappett and Malafouris 2011). It is not that we only now recognize the importance of the materiality of the monument: the works just listed provide ample evidence in the texts and in the references to a long-standing understanding of that point. It is that we now perceive more clearly the dynamism and restlessness of this relationship, the vibrancy of once seemingly inert matter (Bennett 2010). The multiscalar nature of the archaeological record noted throughout this volume applies here as well as the durability and extended use-life of the tombs brought them into contact with generation after generation of users so that they served as the site for gradual changes in the performance of mortuary ritual and for the renegotiation of the relationships among the living and between the living and the dead as I have argued elsewhere (Miller Bonney 2013).

As will be clear scholars have not engaged with the Prepalatial tombs in the manner proposed here. For example, explorations of the relationship between the tombs and the landscape (Murphy 2011) or the sensory experiences in the tombs (Hamilakis 2013) have not addressed the contingency of the tombs and their continuing unfolding over time through the continued depositions of people and things at the sites. The reliance on the plans does not take proper account of practices of construction (Jones 2012; McFadyen 2013) or, I would argue, of the practices of use that form memories and in particular the ways in which the



Fig. 2.4. Tomb at Ayia Kyriaki



Fig. 2.5. Tomb at Kaloï Limenes

architecture structures performance in the process of commemoration (Jones 2007, 45–7). Similarly treating the tomb artefacts in isolation does not acknowledge their participation in the assembling of the tholos. Tholoi and objects and people always were entangled (Hodder 2012), and we cannot draw out their enmeshed narrative unless we acknowledge the dependencies among them.

This paper argues for a new epistemology of the tombs that recognizes the processes and intra-actions that always were drawing the tholoi into the present. We first examine the ways in which scholars and the public have interacted with the tombs and the different types of knowledge that have resulted. We then turn to a case study where we investigate more thoroughly how this new, materially grounded approach would produce a more full-bodied narrative in which the people, the grave goods and the tomb architecture all are brought together to reveal the assembling and reassembling of the cemetery at Yerokambos by which people and things and tombs always were reproducing each other (Webmoor and Witmore 2008).

Assembling the Tholoi archaeologically

Making lists as making knowledge

Archaeologists first became aware of the tombs just after 1900, more than 50 years before the discovery and excavation of the complex at Yerokambos and at a time when the history of the EBA was not well understood. At first the tholoi appeared to be concentrated in south central Crete. The early discoveries (Paribeni 1904; 1913; Xanthoudides 1916; 1918) astonished excavators with evidence of hundreds of burials and masses of pottery from collective interments carried out in some instances over hundreds of years accompanied by secondary manipulation of the remains. Xanthoudides, the ephor of Crete and a particularly adept detector of the tholoi, assembled the fifteen he had excavated into the foundational work *Vaulted Tombs of the Mesara* (1924) which included an introduction by Arthur Evans, the excavator of the Late Bronze Age Palace at Knossos. The publication established the diagnostic features of a tholos: a circular stone structure with thick walls and a narrow entrance often framed by a trilithon post-and-lintel with a corbeled vault different from the beehive vaults of Mycenaean tholoi and more like those on Cretan cheese dairies. Thick deposits of bones and pottery spoke to the collectivity of the mortuary practices, although Xanthoudides posited that larnakes (clay coffins) used in some later tombs signaled the emergence of social hierarchies (but see Papadatos 2014). Both Evans and Xanthoudides looked to North Africa, Libya and Egypt respectively, for the origins of the tombs. While the excavator meticulously recorded measurements of the tomb he was, like most after him, more interested in the contents of the tombs – the masses of pottery, small finds and skeletal material. So he included photographs of only five of the 15 tombs in the report – Koumasa A and B, Platanos A and B, and Kalathiana – ironically as these well-preserved examples are less in need of documentation. The others – Hagia Eirene E and ε, Salame, Koutsokera, and Drakones Δ and Z – all have been destroyed, reduced to rubble by local residents and Porti now is completely covered in vegetation while Xanthoudides himself filled in Platanos C. So while he was well-positioned to document the construction of the tombs in fact he published only generalized descriptions, focusing on their commonalities: the occasional

presence of small annexes or paved areas and the fact that in general the interior floors are slightly lower than the external ground level.

By the time Branigan assembled the tholoi in *The Tombs of Mesara: A study of funerary architecture and ritual in southern Crete, 2800–1700 BC* (Branigan 1970; completed in 1968) archaeologists had excavated or identified an additional 34 tombs (Marinatos 1924–5, 1929, 1930–1; Evans 1928; Banti 1930–1; Karo 1930; Schörgendorfer 1951; Platon 1955; 1956; 1959; Alexiou 1958; 1960a; 1960b; 1967; Hood 1957; Levi 1961–2; Davaras 1964; 1968; Sakellarakis 1965; 1968; Faure 1969), nearly always previously looted although whether in the Bronze Age or later is unclear, and at least one of which (Marinatos 1929) lay outside the south central region. These finds substantially increased the data about tholos construction. Branigan's book established a template for thinking about the tombs: each tholos was an assemblage, containing evidence for Cretan mortuary practices and beliefs but also for broader social developments such as emerging social differentiation, key to the development of palatial hierarchies, with the paved areas outside the tomb serving as arenas for social negotiation and competitive display. In the appendices Branigan provided a list of 75 tombs (many of which he himself had not visited and knew only indirectly from the publications) as well as tables of grave good types, tomb diameters, and a table of architectural features: paved area, projecting slabs, and annexes. By *Dancing with Death: Life and Death in Southern Crete c. 3000–2000 BC* (Branigan 1993), the list had grown to 94 tombs, enriched by the discovery and emergency excavation of the tholos at Ayia Kyriaki A (Blackman and Branigan 1982), Branigan's survey with Blackman in the western Asterousia Massif (Blackman and Branigan 1975; 1978) and an expanded discussion of Prepalatial Cretan mortuary practices.

Branigan had created two assemblages of tombs. The first was typological, embodied in the lists whose enumeration of tombs and tomb features contributed to an emphasis on the number and distribution of tholoi and their architectural features. The second assemblage was the tombs as repositories for the evidence of early Cretan civilization. According to Branigan's typology the actual tomb architectures presented three sets of issues. Functionally the tomb complex was divided into two realms: the circular space served for the deposit of bodies and grave goods, the annexes in front, when present, used for rituals, mortuary or perhaps otherwise. The nature of the roof was more problematic, and Branigan could not resolve this issue since at some sites, e.g. Platanos with an internal diameter of 10 m, a corbeled vault seemed structurally impossible (see Papadopoulos 2010 for a review of the arguments; see also Warren 2007). Finally, Branigan was interested in the tomb's situation in the landscape solely with respect to the orientation of the tomb entrance and its position (always lower in altitude) and distance (never more than 150 m) from the settlement. The lists of tombs became canonical assemblages reproduced with only occasional attempts (Pelon 1976) to verify the contents but more frequently (Sbonias 1995; Panagiotopoulos 2002) reproduced with few if any changes. Belli (1984) examined many of the tombs on Branigan's 1970 list, creating drawings and photographs and updating the status of the tombs, reassembling the tholoi into three geographic groupings – the western Asterousia and the coast, the eastern Asterousia, and the Mesara proper. Only Goodison and Guarita (2005) actually attempted to verify the 1993 list, going beyond what Branigan had done, and examining every identifiable site over the course of a decade. They eliminated duplications caused by archaeologists using different names for the same site and sites for which there was no evidence of mortuary use or for which the architectural details did not conform to

the typology. They concluded that archaeologists had excavated or identified 78 tholos tombs since the beginning of the 20th century, and of those 13 had been destroyed. By shrinking the list they affirmed Branigan's criteria and demanded they be applied consistently: there were just too many tholoi in the landscape. Legarra Herrero (2014) has acknowledged their work while retaining some of the earlier names they had changed and incorporating sites they had discounted but identifying them as of dubious character in his compendium of tombs and including a compendium of all the lists.

These lists conveyed a sense of completeness unrelated to the material structures themselves which had become abstracted, dematerialized and collectivized by the reassembling and list-making. Reduced to floor plans and tables of dimensions the tholoi had lost all reference to the builders and users and to the processes surrounding their assembling and disassembling. Notable exceptions were the publications by Goodison and Guarita and by Belli. Belli looked more closely at the tombs themselves than had anyone else as revealed by his descriptions and even more by his drawings in which he captured the condition of some tombs in the 1980s. Comparing the drawings with the extant structures emphasizes the ongoing decay of the sites. Goodison and Guarita's descriptions also highlight the tombs' contingency as they emphasize the extent to which the tombs as they found them in the late 1990s had changed looking to the original descriptions and photographs. Both publications highlight how the tombs in their fragmentary state still provide information about the tombs. In their brokenness the structures disclose the way in which the builders had assembled them with wall joins revealing sequences of construction and the steady stream of decisions by the builders as to how and where to place the blocks. They convey a sense of the processes by which users shaped them. By contrast, assembled into lists and floor plans each tomb is frozen in what appears to be its final stage as even tombs now lost. The list and plans conform to modernist expectations about determining common threads for analysis.

Assembling tombs as containers

Branigan's second assemblage was of tombs as repositories of evidence for the emergence of civilization on Prepalatial Crete, a narrative that contradicted the then prevailing view of the period as a time of simple egalitarian culture (e.g. Cherry 1986), economic complexity and social differentiation appearing only after the beginning of the MBA. Branigan's investigation of the objects in the tombs revealed their diversity and richness and allowed archaeologists to push the roots of palatial social and economic structures, and with them the origins of European civilization, back nearly to the Neolithic: "In the continent that would later be named Europe, the set of complex urban experiences we call 'civilization' began on the island of Crete" (Betancourt 2008, 3). Tomkins (in press), remarking on the Prepalatial transformation of the Cretan landscape from one of egalitarian hamlets and farmsteads to one with cities that served as the centers for activities that accentuated difference and consumption, writes, "In other words, during the space of a millennium Crete had in certain key respects come to look more like modern western societies" with the appearance of social differentiation and elite consumption. The similarity, he observes, "demanded investigation." In a similar vein, Legarra Herrero (2012, 325) summarizes the object of inquiry: "The Prepalatial period on Crete constitutes one of those key phases in European history during which a set of changes occurred that would have significant implications for the long-term cultural development of the sub-continent."

The tholoi, repositories for significant quantities of pottery and other goods, held valuable evidence of this change. Platon's (1956) Prepalatial designation supports the teleological thrust of these statements, reflecting the persistence of Evans's (1921) vision of Crete as the cradle of European civilization. Others have addressed the historiography of Evans's influence on Cretan archaeology (McEnroe 1995; 2002; Hamilakis 2002; Papadopoulos 2005; Hamilakis and Momigliano 2006), and reference to the issue is included here as context for the role of the tholoi as crucial sources of data in the assembling of scholarship on Prepalatial Crete.

Responding to a narrative arc focused on state formation archaeologists have assembled the tholoi in a totalizing and essentializing account according to which the earliest tombs, constructed around 3100 BCE constitute a homogeneous assemblage of circular structures with an interior diameter no greater than five meters, containing large amounts of pottery (Legarra Herrero 2012). Rather than territorial markers for nearby settlements (Branigan 1970; 1993; Murphy 1998), the first tholoi provided a locus for the formation and maintenance of social relationships among the otherwise dispersed population that practiced marginal agriculture and transhumance, erecting farmsteads that rarely lasted more than a few generations (Whitelaw 2000; Relaki 2004; Legarra Herrero 2011; 2012; 2014; Sbonias 2012; Tomkins forthcoming). Legarra Herrero (2009, 2012, 2014), who has commented on the structure of the tombs, views their collectivity as proof of an egalitarian society while Tomkins (2012) suggests the tombs constituted an elite effort to assert their qualitative superiority and emphasizes the way in which the collective interments hearken back to Neolithic cave burials. In EM IIA (*c.* 2650 BCE) annexes were added to some of the existing tombs and construction of new cemeteries usually with anterooms spread north and into the Mesara plain, and the deposition of off-island material increased (Legarra Herrero 2012) although whether these changes marked competition among individuals or communities remains unresolved (Relaki 2004; Tomkins and Schoep 2010; Schoep and Tomkins 2012). Both the anterooms and the increase in luxury goods in the tomb indicate the emergence of elites seeking, with the annexes, to control access to the tombs (and thereby the ancestors) and competing in ritual displays outside the tombs. By the beginning of MM I (*c.* 1900 BCE) some individuals are placed in clay coffins known as larnakes although evidence indicates these too may have been collective (Papadatos 2014). Construction of the tombs and their mortuary use ends at most sites by the beginning of the Protopalatial period with a recentering of ritual activity at the palaces and at peak sanctuaries. While a few tholoi were reused in the Late Palatial period (1650–1200 BCE) there is no clear evidence for how populations after the Bronze Age interacted – if at all – with the tombs.

In this assembling of the tombs the emphasis has shifted from creating a catalogue with subsets according to distinctive features visible in the floor plans to the tombs as containers for bodies and things. Architectural modification in this assemblage occurs in a contested landscape in which built display expresses power. Tellingly all these arguments can be made without really talking about the material structures which remain strangely absent.

The assemblage of the tombs by the public and the archaeological service

Since their rediscovery and excavation the surviving tholoi have been similarly essentialized as Bronze Age Tholos Tombs, the designation that appears on the yellow on brown signs posted by the archaeological service at a few sites (Ayios Kyrillos, Apesokare A and B, Kamilari A, Koumasa, Lebena Yerokambos, Platanos A and B). As Goodison and Guarita (2005) discovered in their survey the tombs have been vulnerable to predations by a local populace seeking building materials at least a dozen reduced to piles of rocks in open fields, reassembled in the construction of field walls and houses. Over the last five years this author (in a different kind of assembling) has hunted down nearly all the remaining tombs, and while most are as Goodison and Guarita found them, the reassembling/disassembling continues with the apparent losses of uncompleted Tombs B and C at Ayia Kyriaki, Kalathiana B, Christos B and Goodison and Guarita's South Coast 11B. 15 tombs have been enclosed by Greek archaeological service fences (Sopata Kouses, Platanos A and B, Koumasa A, B and E; Lebena Papoura I and Ib, Lebena Yerokambos II and Ila, Kamilari A, Archanes B and E, Ayia Photia both). Eight others (Ayios Kyrillos, Krotos, Korakies/Miamou, Krasi A, Moni Odigetria A and B, Goodison and Guarita's South Coast 8A and 8B) are on land enclosed for agricultural purposes so coincidentally protected along with the crops and the sheep and goats. Both tombs at Apesokare, while not enclosed, have been marked by signposts. The rest dot the countryside open to the predations of anyone who happens by, saved in some instance (Trypiti, Livari, Mesorrachi, Phylakas A and B, Christos, Stou Skaniari to Lakko 1 and 2) by their remoteness and difficulty of access. Others are less fortunate and tombs at Vorou, particularly B, Marathokephalo (both), and Porti, all located in modern olive groves, are heavily overgrown reflecting a reluctance to destroy the ancient structures and uncertainty as to how to deal with them although the tombs at Marathokephlo have been repurposed as storage areas for agricultural equipment. The tholoi at Megaloi Skinoi were enclosed in 2013 by a private fence and the area around the tombs subjected to clearly illegal digging while Lebena Zervou was fenced off by a private party in spring 2014 as part of the construction of a new house.

The opening of the new prehistoric galleries at the archaeological museum in Iraklion revealed a new assembling of the tholoi into a totalized Prepalatial Tomb. The pottery in the display cases is arranged in a chronological sequence but without identification of which tomb was the source essentialized as Grave Goods. Some jewelry, stone vessels and other small finds have been segregated by type in their own displays, separated by space and the glass of the cases from the pottery with which they were deposited. In this exhibit, which includes neither a drawing nor a photograph of one of the monuments from which the objects derive, the tombs have been reduced to pure concept as though they had no material existence.

The most curious aspect of these assemblings, the one strain academic and the other public, is the comparative lack of interaction or contact between the two sets of processes. As noted above the scholarly discussions rarely include actual pictures of the tombs which instead are reduced to plans on the apparent assumption that these two-dimensional renderings will provide all the essential information. There are descriptions of the tomb walls in some of the excavation reports, and occasional references to the particularities of wall construction (Branigan 1993) and the investment of labor required to gather and stack the boulders

(Legarra Herrero 2012) but upon completion the tomb is finished, a static container, a condition belied by the way the tomb was used (as discussed in more detail below) and the current ongoing disassembling. While the museum display has scholarly underpinnings, there is no evidence of the academic engagement with the tombs at the sites themselves. The non-specialist visitor to the tholoi confronts a bewildering array of walls in various states of repair with no clear indication of which structure was used as a tomb or indeed that the tombs were linked to a community as opposed to an individual. The local populations, while generally respectful of the remaining structures (although Megaloi Skinoi A and B may be in peril) even in the repurposing, have casual interactions with them as evidenced by the debris of shotgun shells (Trypiti), dead goats (Ayia Kyriaki in summer 2013) and occasional soft drink containers (Ayios Kyillos in summer 2012). If they understand them as erstwhile cemeteries (a topic for future research) they do not indicate any sense that these were places where their ancestors were buried as there is no sign that the tombs are seen as part of Cretan heritage in contrast with the ubiquity of images of bulls and snake goddesses.

Assembling the cemetery at Yerokambos

The tombs in fact never were static but were interwoven into people's lives for hundreds of years. The interactions with the tombs were never completed structures passively receiving bodies and objects; rather the tombs were for interactions both inside and outside the structure (Hamilakis 2013; Miller Bonney 2013). The users were aware that their deposits were simply the latest in a series reaching back to the founding of the tomb. Thus we can understand the cemetery complex as an assembling of people - living and dead - and the objects they chose to deposit inside and outside the tombs.

The original tholos

The mortuary complex at Yerokambos is one of the best-documented of the Prepalatial tholoi because it had escaped serious looting. The primary tholos, Tomb II (Figs 2.6 and 2.7), approximately 3 km west of the Lentas promontory, is among the earliest of the tholoi, ante-dating four other extant examples in the region – Zervou north-east of Lentas, Papoura I and Ia just to the north-west of the town and Ila at Yerokambos – by nearly 500 years and serving as a center of community for the otherwise dispersed population (Relaki 2004; Legarra Herrero 2012, 335). The builders, having agreed on the location, assembled on the site in sufficiently large numbers to insure the collaborative manpower needed for the acquisition, transport and positioning of the substantial blocks (Legarra-Herrero 2012). They engaged with the earth itself embedding the 1.9 m thick circuit wall so it rested on bedrock, piling up boulders and rocks likely from the nearby slope, packed with smaller stones and clay, in imitation of the local rocky outcroppings and shallow caves (Tomkins 2012). The exterior of the circuit wall no longer is visible because of accumulated silt, but the outside of contemporary tombs such as those at Kaloι Limenes and Ayia Kyriaki (Figs 2.4 and 2.5) reveal the integration into the landscape and expose the inaccuracy of the neat external boundary of the floor plans. Access was to be through a roughly one meter square entrance framed by three megaliths, and a corbeled vault sprang from the offset at the upper



Fig. 2.6. Tomb II at Lebena Yreokambos

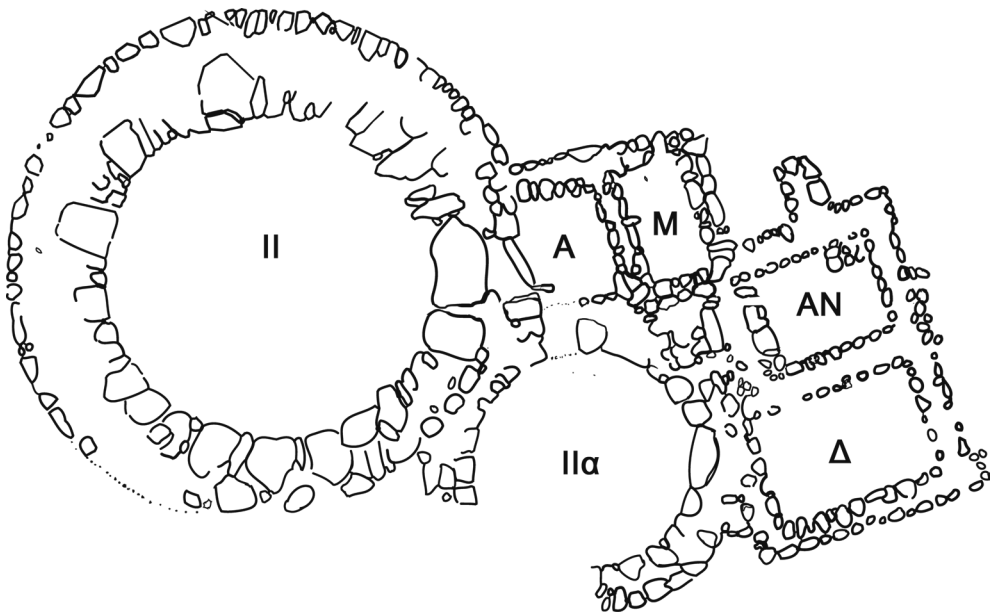


Fig. 2.7. Plan of cemetery at Lebena Yreokambos (after Alexiou and Warren 2004, fig. 12)

interior wall. When the vault collapsed from an original design flaw early in the tomb's existence the users made repairs (Alexiou and Warren 2004, 15).

In this rugged, mound-like structure the users deposited hundreds of pots for nearly 500 years. At first the deceased were placed directly on the ground accompanied by probably two vases, most frequently a globular two-handled biconical vase the excavators called tankards and that seem suited for shared drinking and pyxides, smaller containers with lids, these two accounting for nearly 75% of the EM I and EM IIA pottery. A much smaller number of personal items were recovered but this may be a result of the materials being more susceptible to decay. As the tomb deposit grew bones and pots were pushed to the perimeter of the tomb interior either as part of the interment ritual or in a secondary manipulation process unrelated to a new death. Each burial was its own assembling, a reassembling of things used in life with things newly assembled for the ceremony, with the growing mortuary deposit a larger assemblage that incorporated the individual – the dead permanently and the living fleetingly. The dead themselves were first assembled as a body with grave goods, and then reassembled as disarticulated, defleshed bones now separated from the objects with which the deceased originally was interred, some bones removed from the tomb assemblage altogether, others reassembled with similar bones, usually just long bones and skulls. The individual who entered the tomb interacted not just with bodies and pots but with smells so intense visitors could taste them and encountered human remains and pottery that, as the tomb deposit continued to be assembled, were increasingly distant in time (Hamilakis 2013; Miller Bonney 2013). Effects and affects became more complex and layered as the decades passed, bodies decayed, ceramic styles changed, and the procession of burials and re-entry continued. Contact with vases previously placed in the tomb confirmed the appropriateness of and preference for the deposition of tankards and pyxides throughout EM I, conveying a shared understanding of what it meant to be dead and how to mark the departed. Suggestions that during this first 500 years there were additional non-mortuary rituals at the tombs (Branigan 1970) remain unsubstantiated. So presumably assemblings at the tomb always would have been in the context of burials, with the participants on each occasion different, even if only slightly, from both the preceding and the subsequent events. These gatherings perpetuated the memory of the place drawing the tomb and its contents always into the present. Perhaps most important the mortuary use was an integral part of the assembling of the tomb as a tomb that only began with the initial construction.

Assembling the annexes

At the very end of EM IIA, while the original tholos still was in use, a secondary, smaller tholos, Tomb IIA, was added abutting Tholos II on the southeast, immediately adjacent to the entrance. Not long after construction the interior of IIA was burned and at about the same time, while both tholoi still were in use, the users added rectangular compartments AN and Delta and likely a third compartment further to the southeast. Neither had a doorway and must have been entered from above although the original height of the walls is unknown. Subsequent to the burning in IIA the floor was covered with sand creating a small sealed deposit – 25 vases – of very late EM IIA and some EM IIB pottery under the sand while above were more than 150 cups and a small number of pouring vessels with a few interments. AN contained at least 118 vases and sherd material for another 524 (Alexiou and Warren 2004, 171), almost all cups and no burials. Delta contained fewer vases, perhaps 100, but like AN

predominantly cups and jugs and unlike AN was used for interments. Around 1900 BCE the entry to II was filled and that to IIa was sealed and rooms A and M and two additional rooms north of AN were added directly east, with A abutting and effectively blocking access to both tholoi. A served primarily as an ossuary although 90 conical cups were found beneath the bones (Alexiou and Warren 2004, 158–9). M, which was filled with conical cups, must have been used for liquid offerings and may have been in use into Middle Minoan (“MM”) IB, along with AN and Delta. The complex ceased to be used as a site for burials late in Middle Minoan (MM) IA or during the MMIA/B transition (Alexiou and Warren 2004, 180).

These developments tell a story of new ways of assembling at the cemetery and a gradual change in focus. The addition of Tholos IIa in late EM IIA initiated a sequence of reassemblings that changed interactions of users, pots and place. The addition of the secondary tholos changed the appearance of the complex and the options for movement. Constructed of smaller stones it less clearly implicated the entire community in its construction and restricted the angle for viewing the entrance to the tholos, obscuring part of the trilithon entrance. AN and Delta further interfered with physical access. Moreover the annexes shifted the visual focus toward the southeast and away from the doorway giving new prominence to the open space before Tomb II, introducing a certain ambiguity. Where was the complex’s center? Because Delta must have been entered from above it altered the way in which the dead would have been introduced to the interior – no longer pushed or dragged through the tholos door. Further reassembling added rooms A and M and blocked the entrances to II and IIa drawing to a close any further assembling of these burial deposits. The proliferation of cups, now more frequently deposited without burials, signaled the importance of toasting rituals which may or may not have been part of mortuary activity. The bones in M mark a reassembling not only of the bones themselves but of the burial rituals with primary treatment of the body occurring somewhere else altogether and only the bones deposited without grave goods.

Perhaps even more significant the annexes changed the meaning of the burial community reassembling the users into those who were buried in the primary tholos (the original locus for all) and those who were buried in the secondary tholos while ultimately some additional subset was interred in Delta. While some have speculated (Alexiou and Warren 2004, 191–2) that IIa was constructed to accommodate an extended branch of the original social unit, the real effect was the separation and fragmentation of the community, a process that already had begun with the construction early in EM IIA, that is before secondary tholos IIa, of a double tholos complex at Lebena Papoura, only 3 km to the east, and that continued in EM IIB with the building of another tholos at Lebena Zervou only a kilometer further east (Alexiou and Warren 2004). While relationships between the groups who used II and IIa may have been close (Alexiou and Warren 2004, 191), the reconfiguration altered the possibilities for behavior. By the time the annexes AN and Delta were in use bones and pottery were separated, the ceramic vessels no longer serving as accompaniments to the dead, and at A and M only defleshed bones were deposited with no indication of any actual burial.

Finally alteration of the depositional patterns suggests that users were redefining appropriate burial activity. The more standardized and less frequently decorated cups that are part of the lower deposit in IIa and comprise the only pottery in the upper level of the secondary tomb mark a change in what is appropriate to leave with the dead and indicate a formalization of conduct at the tomb. From EM IIB on users deposited large numbers

of cups and a smaller number of jugs. Warren observes that the cup “seems to have begun within EM II but flourished chiefly in EM III-MMI. Its use ... marks a distinct change in practice from EM I times” (Alexiou and Warren 2004, 55). People offered the cups by themselves not as grave goods, and there was a shift, evidenced by the use of standardized cups, to toasting outside the tomb. In short, rather than mingling with the dead in the tomb, individuals distanced themselves with external rituals, a change that appears to coincide with the recentering of the community at the newly constructed substantial settlements.

Assembling the archaeological site

So far as the excavator could determine there was only a single unsuccessful looting attempt after abandonment of the site around 1900 BCE. At least one building, the still encroaching structure that cuts into the south-west quadrant of the secondary tholos was constructed at an unknown date but prior to Alexiou’s work at the cemetery. There is otherwise no material trace of human engagement with the site until the excavation of the cemetery in 1957. The primary tomb was packed with pottery and skeletal material. It is a tribute to Alexiou’s skill and professionalism that in a single season he excavated and recorded most of the data and transferred the masses of pottery to the Archaeological Museum in Iraklion where a selection was on display by the early 1980s (Sakellarakis 1982). But it was only with Warren’s participation in the ceramic studies that tombs, pottery and small finds finally were assembled and published (Alexiou and Warren 2004). It is not clear when the archaeological fence was put in place, but as the cemetery underlay part of a complex of houses and a field on the road from Lendas to Kaloi Limenes, early protection would have been essential. That fence makes the Yerokambos cemetery part of a small group that have received this sort of protection, and the evidence from the Internet photographs posted indicate that the tomb continues to attract attention from 21st century visitors who may or may not know what they actually have before them. Whether there is a way to bring this monument and the other tholoi under the protective shelter of a heritage movement remains to be seen.

Conclusion

The Cretan Prepalatial tholoi have served a variety of epistemological endeavors. As constituents in lists they support modernist assumptions about the existence of underlying regularities to human existence that can be discerned by the careful scholar. The thoughtful arrangement of data yields insight into the patterns of the past, so it is sufficient to create lists of tombs with pavements, tombs with projecting slabs and so on. It also is appropriate apparently to discuss the tomb contents in the aggregate without necessarily referring to the materiality of the structure that contained them. Yet the filling of a tholos was integral to its purpose, and the deposits reveal what people thought was suitable for use in a mortuary setting. There is an interplay between tombs and things and people that is lost if we essentialize and dematerialize the tholoi. Those tombs such as Yerokambos that retain so much of the original construction convey how important that materiality was to the people who built and used the cemeteries and for whom they were places where deeply significant actions were performed. Finally, without this epistemological tack we lose awareness of the role of the current population in the ongoing and always unfinished lives of these monuments.

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3.

The life assemblage: taphonomy as history and the politics of pastoral activity

Hannah Chazin

For many years, the idea of assemblages has been integral to zooarchaeological analysis, providing a way of tracing the impacts of human behavior and taphonomic processes through time. However, this chapter suggests that the integration of domesticated animals – in particular herd animals – into human societies creates the possibility of, and the need for, particular acts of assembling of people, animals, and landscapes. The mixing of species, sexes, and ages in herds; practices of sharing and/or loaning animals; the distribution of labor around the herds; and the coordination of movements of groups of animals and humans all suggest ways in which herds themselves represent processes or loci for acts of assembling. Similarly, the foods derived from animals also play a role in acts of assembling involved in commensality. Feasts (as well as other less marked forms of consumption) are sites or moments of assembly – of people, food, and other materials.

This discussion extends the logics of incompleteness and contingency fundamental to taphonomic analyses in zooarchaeology into the “life assemblage” itself. I argue that the political stakes of assemblings are two-fold. First, they produce the background of everyday, unremarkable practices of production, consumption and exchange. Second, assembling is also key to producing material, semiotic narratives of how things (and people) should be, that is, the production of discourses of power. The chapter draws on zooarchaeological analysis of faunal remains from pastoralists societies in the Late Bronze Age South Caucasus as a case study. It will suggest how analyzing pastoralism as acts of assembling – acts that produce both structures of practices and forms of meaning – can productively address the simultaneously economic and political stakes of the organization of pastoralist life.

KEYWORDS: PASTORALISM, POLITICS, HUMAN-ANIMAL RELATIONSHIPS, RELIGION, SOUTH CAUCASUS

Introduction: what is the life assemblage?

The life assemblage is an analytical sleight of hand that allows the zooarchaeologist to move from a dusty pile of broken bits of bones (or an even more inert spreadsheet of numbers and alphanumeric codes) in the present moment to a sense of living and (potentially lively) animals of the past. This movement from present to past and from archaeological artifact to dynamic, fleshly bodies is often mapped as a transition from the orderly world of excavation units, sieves, and calipers (man-made tools of the archaeologist) to the chaotic messiness of nature, as is richly illustrated in the diagram from Reitz and Wing's (2008) introductory zooarchaeology textbook (Fig. 3.1). Tellingly, the composition of the diagram itself asserts the conceptual orderliness of the archaeologist in the present by showing a smooth flow of animals' bones (and ostensibly their meaning, grounded in a material 'facticity') from past to present. Articles and book chapters addressing taphonomic concerns in zooarchaeology typically include a similar diagram showing the various stages of reduction resulting from taphonomic processes, moving from the 'life assemblage' (living animals) to the 'death assemblage' (dead animals) to the deposited assemblage (the bones that make it to a particular place of deposition) and so on and so forth until we reach the sample or archaeological assemblage (the bones sitting on one's desk). In this chapter, I begin to re-think the first element in that series, the life assemblage, as processes of assembling rather than as a static (and sometimes naturalized) object that the zooarchaeologist strives to reconstruct through analysis.

Typically defined as the population of living animals (of a single or multiple species) in particular time and place (cf. Reitz and Wing 2008, 118–19), the life assemblage serves as a conceptual device for understanding the possible taphonomic transformations that separate past human, animal, and object lives and present archaeological data. While the question of "how do these bones in the present relate to the lives of human and animals in the past" is a key question in the production of archaeological knowledge from faunal remains, the problem with using the "life assemblage" as an analytical tool is that it reifies certain divisions between nature and culture that sit uneasily with many of the theoretical apparatuses being developed in contemporary archaeology.

The first hint of the problem is the slippage in the way the term 'life assemblage' is used in the zooarchaeological literature. Sometimes – often when discussing the hunting of wild animals but also sometimes for herding as well – the life assemblage is treated as a biological fact, the natural structure of an independently reproducing population (cf. Redding 1984; Cribb 1987; Reitz and Wing 2008, 99–103).¹ In contrast, other life assemblages – usually those from pastoralist herds in 'complex' societies – are seen as 'social facts' that reflect the conscious organization of society (cf. Payne 1973; Sherratt 1981; Arbuckle *et al.* 2009; Greenfield 2010). In some ways, this dichotomy reflects the presumed distance between 'simple' hunting and 'complex' arrangements such as markets and tribute. But whether a particular herd is treated as a direct reflection of 'natural' populations or evidence of human intervention, the underlying logic is that these are separable categories and that human action takes place on the substrate of a nature that is separate and prior to any cultural action.

This initial division undergirds archaeological interpretations where 'natural' is taken as a baseline, against which any deviations are evidence of 'culture' (eg. Gould and Watson 1982, 373). Furthermore, any assemblages that **do** conform to the 'natural' pattern require

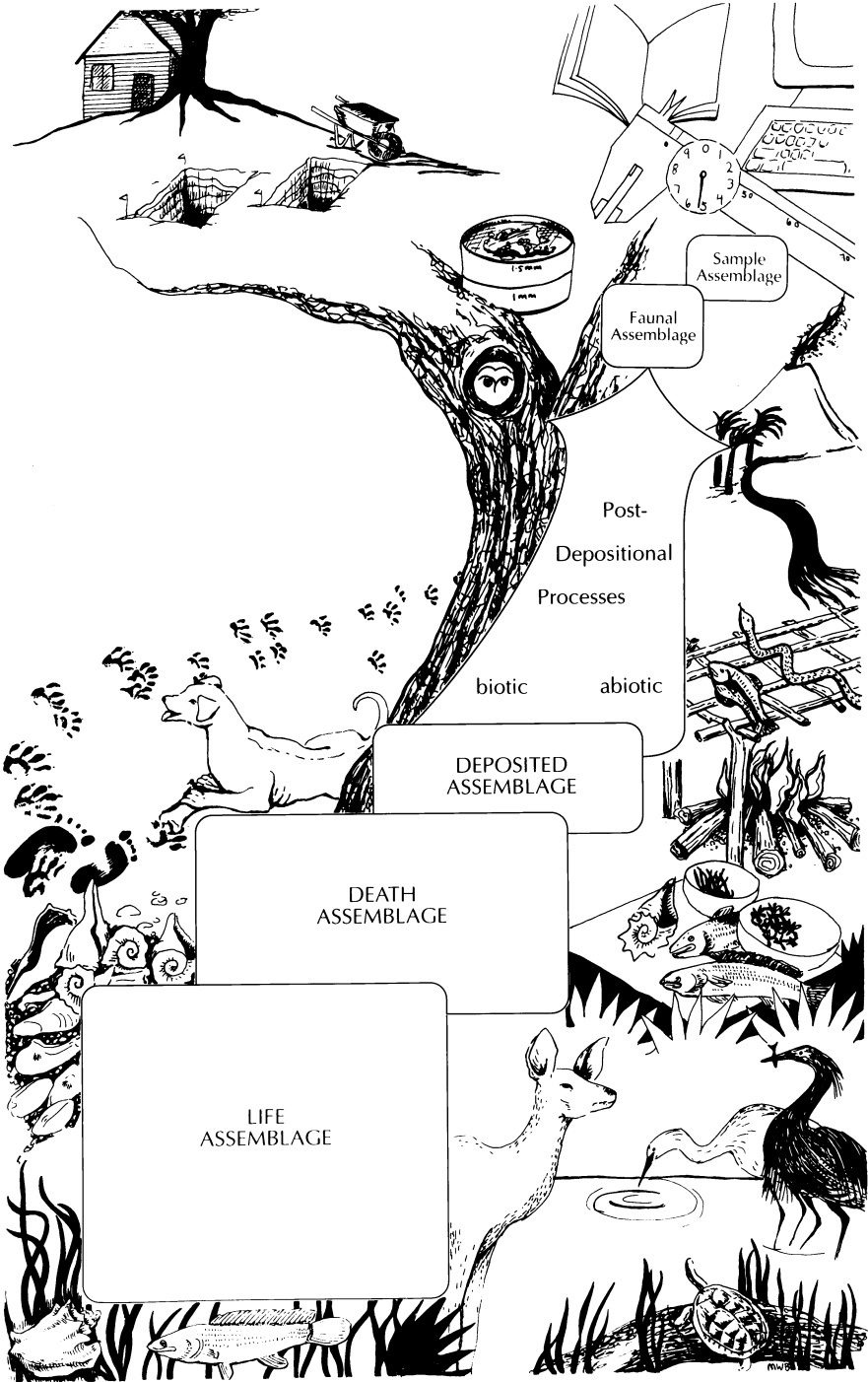


Fig. 3.1. Reproduced from Reitz and Wing (1999)

no explanation, they are merely ‘natural’ or at the very least, apolitical. Thus politics is restricted to deviations from an *a priori* natural, which is a particularly pernicious problem in the study of pastoralism, which is treated as a set of practices that are especially ecologically-determined (cf. Barth 1961; Barfield 1993; Frachetti 2009; Hole 2009; for an insightful critique and history of such approaches to pastoralism, see Sneath 2007). The reification of the natural is problematic for a number of reasons, and underlies practices and concepts across multiple domains of archaeological knowledge production. However, in this chapter I focus on ramifications of this for how we understand the political implications and entailments of pastoralism.

Instead of this division between ‘natural’ and ‘social’ life assemblages, my goal in this chapter is to explore how we might explode the ‘life assemblage’ (and consequently, the ‘death assemblage’) into various acts of *assembling* that shape the roles animals play in human societies. While undoubtedly any sort of human-animal relationship involves moments of assembling, in this chapter I analyze ‘pastoralist’ societies, both because that is what I am most familiar with, but also because the relationship between humans and domesticated herd animals is a *particular* type of human-animal relationship. It differs in certain ways from human-animal relationships involving wild animals or non-herd domesticated animals, both in terms of the supporting material assemblages (Mlekuz 2013) as well as the sort of human-animal relationality² and ontologies involved (Ingold 1980; 2000; Russell 2007; Armstrong 2010).

This attempt to re-approach the idea of the life assemblage involves a reconsideration of pastoralism as a series of social practices that bring together people, animals, organisms, landscapes, and things in and through time and space, rather than as an ecologically-bound subsistence activity or as market-driven economic system. In the second part of the chapter, I explore how this new approach to the life assemblage allows us to reconsider the political stakes of pastoralism. I present data from excavations at Late Bronze Age sites from the South Caucasus as a case study; to demonstrate the purchase that assembling gives towards understanding the political implications of pastoralist practices. I argue that approaching pastoralism as a set of practices of assembling allows us to identify particular assemblings that create material, discursive arguments about orderings that are both cosmological and political. This approach to politics allows archaeology of political life to move away from a project of purification that separates out politics, religion, and the economy as separate, identifiable domains of social life (Latour 1993; 2004). It also opens up new space for identifying resistance and opposition to practices of political authority in the past. Finally, treating pastoralism as a series of assemblages also bridges analytically to important questions about archaeological methodology and practices of archaeological knowledge production (Chazin 2015).

Making the herd: forms of pastoral assemblings

Assembling at its simplest is the interaction³ of people, animals, organisms, landscapes, and things in time and space. As such, however, assemblings necessarily involve intersecting and entwining histories. Similarly, assemblings may introduce ruptures and disjunctures.

Assemblings are never fully intentional – due to both the affordances and intractability of people, animals, organisms, objects, and landscapes as well as to the contingencies of histories, a result of the mingling of processes and practices at overlapping and intersecting timescales. This multi-temporality of assemblings, which is fundamentally non-linear and unstable, is a key component of the contingency inherent to them (cf. McGlade 1999, 159; Olivier 2004, 212). Thus, assemblings are not a static domain, but rather they are actions taken in the world, which in turn always provoke, make possible, and invite reactions and responses (see the Introduction to this volume). In light of this, how can we imagine pastoralism as a set of assemblings?

Herds themselves are a process of assembling, not only in their day-to-day existence but also in their originary moments. Along with Mlekuz (2013), I argue that the process of domestication itself can be considered an act of assembling, both the physical bodies of the animals themselves but also the necessary technical and cognitive capacities (both human and animal) to coordinate humans and animals in new ways. To speak of this as a moment is slightly misleading; rather it is a *process* that results in the spectrum of ethnographically and archaeologically-attested practices ranging from the exploitation of fully-wild animals to highly genetically modified domesticated species, with many interesting variants in between (O'Connor 1997; Russell 2002; 2007).

In general, pastoralist flocks assemble groups of people and animals within landscapes (cf. Mlekuz 2013). This assembling is shaped by a number of factors, which inform and interrelate with each other. First, the species, age, and sex of the animals comprising it shape the nature of the herd and its movements in time and space. Neither the composition of a herd nor its intended mobility is logically prior. The actual grouping and its movements are the result of the interplay of these constraints and imaginaries, and rely on the agency of both human and non-human actors. Needless to say both are also temporary and contingent, subject to more or less regular alterations, adaptations, and compromises (cf. Dahl and Hjort 1976; Ingold 1980; Barth 1986; Lorimer 2006).

Animals of different species, ages, and sexes have different needs and capabilities in terms of forage, water, and the ability to move long distances (cf. Dahl and Hjort 1976; Chang 1981; Henton 2010; Hammer 2012). These factors are inextricably meshed with the need for specific types of human labor (and laborers), which depend on the number and types of animals to be controlled, the distance to cover, as well as other factors related to the care of the animals comprising the herd (cf. Lorimer 2006). Furthermore, the composition of a particular herd is shaped by practices of loaning and sharing that enact kinship and other social relations (cf. Barth 1986; Reid 1996). Complicating things further, cultural ideas of the relative value of different species, breeds, ages, or sexes of animals will factor in, as the role of herd animals as wealth extends beyond mere market or caloric considerations (Comaroff and Comaroff 1990; 2006). Thus, herd composition, rather than merely biological or ecological, is highly **social** (even as it is informed by the basic biological characteristics of the landscape and the animals themselves).⁴

More obviously, mechanisms for the circulation of animals and their products are also moments of assembling. Circulation is also the usual locus of attention for political economic analyses of zooarchaeological data from complex societies (Crabtree 1990; deFrance 2009). The circulation of animals and their products involves the assembling of people and animals, but can be organized in many different ways. Assembling of individual producers

and consumers (whether through kinship, geographic, or other ties) is different, and has different social implications, than institutionalized mechanisms of tribute and redistribution or market systems in urban centers (cf. Zeder 1991). Circulatory assemblings also require an infrastructure of spaces (such as markets, temples, warehouses, and workshops), human labor (of herders, traders, merchants, priests, judges, bureaucrats, etc), as well as customs, rules, and regulations (see Law and Mol 2008 for an interesting discussion of these issues in contemporary Britain). These assemblings disassemble herds in particular ways through the culling of certain animals, on the basis of species, breed, age, sex, and other physical characteristics. Assemblings that circulate animals are sites for the enactment of political authority and power, inasmuch as they curtail and channel such activities through systems of alliance, trade, taxation, tribute, and redistribution. While the circulation of animals and their products may often result in the centralization or redistribution of wealth or power, in some instances, social mechanisms for the sharing of meat can work to enforce an egalitarian ethos and prevent or slow the accumulation of resources (Gould 1967; Russell 2000; Waguespack 2002). Focusing on assemblings as active processes that involve many kinds of participants circumvents the temptation to merely equate politics with hierarchy and social differentiation.

Finally, moments of consumption are also acts of ‘assembling’, both everyday meals and special occasions, as well as practices (such as rituals and sacrifices) that ‘consume’ animals in non-alimentary ways. Consumption requires the assembling of animal bodies (whole or partial), selected on the basis of species, breed, age, sex, and other physical characteristics. Butchery practices disassemble animal bodies in particular ways, which are shaped by material technologies and customs and rules, as well as by ideas about gender, taste, value, and health (Gifford-Gonzalez 1993; Seetah 2008; Russell 2012). Cultural ideas of what constitutes a ‘proper’ meal (Appadurai 1981; Vardaki 2004; Smith 2006) shape how the meat, milk, marrow, and blood from animals are combined with other plant-based foods, containers and equipment for cooking and serving (Dusinberre 2003; Day and Wilson 2004), as well as the human labor (female or male? private or communal?) needed to prepare it (Hastorf 1996; Bray 2003; White 2005), and the company assembled to consume it (Appadurai; 1981; Dietler and Hayden 2001; McCormick 2002; Vardaki 2004). These combinations depend on access to materials, as well as ideas about nutrition and culturally-encoded tastes (Smith 2006). Such assemblings can be aspirational as well as communicative – a sumptuous dinner can be read as creating or establishing the social distinction the host wishes to attain or as a way of establishing social cohesion and maintaining social boundaries, whether it is between haves and have-nots, different ethnic groups, or different religious faiths.

It is important to note that the bodies of the animals themselves shape the possibility and form of such commensal assemblings. The physical size of animals and the interplay between size and technologies of food preparation and preservation also shape animals’ role in commensal politics. Finbar McCormick (2002) argues that the reciprocal feasting required by medieval Irish law was related to the need to cull cattle in the late winter/early spring (a time of fodder shortage). The sheer size of cattle – too large for a single household to consume before spoiling (in the absence of the cold weather and salt needed to preserve large quantities of meat) – led to a practice of feasting which brought together elites and non-elites through forms of consumption (based on a hierarchy of body parts), that reinforced those social hierarchies. Similarly, Knight’s (2001) discussion of the use of pigs

at Danebury notes that roasting a whole pig takes a long time (which might encourage the gradual removal of cooked meat from the carcass) and that a large group would be needed to consume an entire adult pig. Whether large or small, the physical size of animals, and the relative balance of meat, fat, and bones, has direct bearing on the social practices they participate in.

Thus, the ‘life assemblage’ is actually a series of repeated, overlapping, and intersecting practices of assembling. It is those practices – rather than uniformitarian ideas of stable, ecologically or ‘culture-as-adaptive system’-atically produced life assemblages (‘the herd’) – that is the analytical object of interest for many social zooarchaeologists. In turn, these practices are absolutely key to understanding the taphonomic histories of archaeological assemblages, which was the original purpose of the life assemblage for zooarchaeologists. Thus, the question for archaeologists generally, one pressingly felt in zooarchaeology, is how to move from the assemblage to assembling. In social zooarchaeology, there is a growing consensus that contextual analysis provides at least some of the necessary methodological and analytical scaffolding for such attempts (Bulmer 1976; Meadow 1978; Zeder 1991; Marciniak 2006; cf. Hodder 1991).

The second part of this essay examines how this reconsideration of pastoralism and assemblages might change how archaeologists think about the relationship between pastoral practices and politics. As I have sketched out, the biology (perhaps more accurately, the ethology) and ecology of herds is a deep substrate incorporated into a series of recursive political moments dealing with live animals and their products (along with associated labor and infrastructure). These recursive actions simultaneously create and use raw materials, wealth, distinction,⁵ social groups, political authority, and ideologies. It is in this series of translocations, translations, and transmutations that the political potentialities of pastoralism are to be located.

Herds and politics in the Late Bronze Age South Caucasus

With that in mind, I turn to the archaeological evidence from the Late Bronze Age (1500–1100 BCE) in the South Caucasus. The Late Bronze Age (1500–1100 BCE) in the South Caucasus is marked by a return to permanent settlements after a period of mobile pastoralism, changes in burial practices, new ceramic types (which replace the painted Middle Bronze Age types), and new forms of metallurgical production (for an overview, see Smith *et al.* 2009, 29–31). While the construction of permanent sites enclosed by imposing stone walls is a marked departure from the Middle Bronze Age (with its paucity of settlements), it is clear from recent research in the Tsaghkahovit Plain, Armenia (Smith *et al.* 2009, 398; Lindsay *et al.* 2010, 26) that traditions of pastoralism and mobility continued into the Late Bronze Age.⁶

In the literature, the transition from the Middle to Late Bronze Age in the South Caucasus is marked *materially* by changes in architecture, ceramics, and metallurgy. It is also marked *conceptually* as a moment of great importance for the development of political complexity in the region, both in terms of its visible departure from the Middle Bronze Age and its newly acknowledged role as the origin of the regional political forms that would later be incorporated into the Urartian empire (Smith 2005, 230, 268; Smith *et al.* 2009, 7).

Archaeologists have long interpreted Late Bronze Age fortresses as signs of social evolution (Matirosyan 1964; Burney and Lang 1971; Diakonoff 1984; Kushnareva 1997). Yet, despite this long-standing idea of a major chronological and social transition, until recently, there had been a limited number of intensive excavations of Late Bronze Age sites (Smith *et al.* 2009, 30). Currently, it is not well understood how the material trends (and periodization) established for the region relate to changes in the production of power and authority in Late Bronze Age societies.

I draw on archaeological evidence from the excavations of Late Bronze Age fortified sites,⁷ settlements, ritual spaces, and burials in the Tsaghkahovit Plain, Armenia to show the basic contours of Late Bronze Age political life that have emerged from this work. The Tsaghkahovit Plain has been the site of intensive survey and excavation by the Joint American-Armenian Project for the Archaeology and Geography of Ancient Transcaucasian Societies (Project ArAGATS). Ongoing excavations at two of the Late Bronze Age sites in the Tsaghkahovit Plain – Gegharot and Tsaghkahovit – are beginning to illuminate some of the dynamics of the social, economic, and political organization of the Late Bronze Age inhabitants (see Smith *et al.* 2004; 2009; Badalyan *et al.* 2008; forthcoming). This research has identified four major loci of social life in the Late Bronze Age South Caucasus: (1) fortified sites (2) ritual spaces, (3) settlements (exemplified by the Tsaghkahovit Residential Complex, an extra-mural settlement area near the fortress of Tsaghkahovit), and (4) burials.

The permanent sites enclosed by large stone walls suggest spaces where political authority was emplaced and practiced. The imposition of the large-scale constructions within the landscape of the plain created a new form of political landscape (Smith 2003) that was highly visible, even to the portion of the population that may not have had access to the inner spaces of these sites. But they also represented loci within particular flows of goods between sites in the plain, both in and out of the walled sites. Evidence for the manufacture of goods, such as jewelry, wool, and textiles, at Gegharot (Smith *et al.* 2004, 22; Badalyan *et al.* 2008, 65–9), contrasts with inflow of other products (seen archaeologically through the inflow of ceramic containers).⁸ Studies of ceramics indicate that while production sites were located across the plain, the clay sources on the slopes of Mt Aragats produced the vast majority of pottery circulating in the plain, even as the sites of Gegharot and Aragatsi Berd were the main recipients (Smith *et al.* 2004, 37–8; Lindsay *et al.* 2008, 1680–1). In contrast, the Tsaghkahovit Residential Complex (TRC) is an intermittently occupied settlement area outside the walls of the site of Tsaghkahovit (see Lindsay 2006). While the leveling of bedrock beneath structures represents a considerable investment of energy, architectural remodeling as well as stratified floor levels (with associated radiocarbon dates) support the interpretation of intermittent occupation of the structures by mobile groups (Lindsay and Greene 2013).

Adding a new dimension to these issues, excavations at Gegharot have uncovered three enigmatic ritual spaces that have been labeled Late Bronze Age ‘shrines’ by the excavators (Badalyan *et al.* 2008, 65–72; forthcoming). Broadly, these contexts consist of rooms whose inventories – consisting of particular ceramic forms (highly decorated pots and bowls, ceramic pots stands/idols, stamps, *manghals*), objects of personal adornment, and curated deposits of animal bones, as well as features such as basins and altars (Badalyan *et al.* forthcoming) – suggest an altogether non-quotidian function and are consistent with other assemblages from the region that have been labeled shrines (Smith and Leon 2014). Initial interpretations propose that the spaces were key sites in the creation and maintenance of

new, hieratic forms of authority in the Late Bronze Age (Badalyan et al. forthcoming; Smith and Leon 2014). Their presence suggests that they may have been sites of pilgrimage for (portions of?) the Late Bronze Age population (cf. Kolata 1997), or at the very least, sites of an intense circulation of goods, helping to explain why Gegharot received such a high proportion of ceramics (as containers for different items) from other locales.

Turning to the zooarchaeological evidence, there are some noteworthy patterns. Previous zooarchaeological work by Monahan (2012; see also Badalyan *et al.* 2008), as well as my own research (Chazin 2011) has begun to reveal how animals were integrated into practices in the fortified sites, ritual spaces, and residential complexes. First, there is the predominance of sheep over goats in citadel and terrace contexts at Tsaghkahovit and Gegharot, in contrast to the Tsaghkahovit Residential Complex, the intermittently-occupied residential area outside of Tsaghkahovit (Fig. 3.2). While the reasons for such patterns are unclear – they could be related to the production of wool textiles or to a system of value where sheep are either seen as more valuable or more appropriate for the types of activities taking place inside the walls of sites – fortified sites appear to have been places where *sheep* (rather than other animals) were assembled. Interestingly, this pattern is taken to the extreme in the faunal deposits associated with the ritual spaces at Gegharot, with a ratio of 6.5 sheep for every goat.

Similarly, not only were the activities taking place within the walls of settlements preferentially assembling sheep over goats, they also preferentially gathered together young animals. The mortality curves based on the age at death of sheep and goats shows that most animals were killed at between one and three years of age (Fig. 3.3). The preponderance of young animals suggests, unsurprisingly, that the animals entering the fortresses do not represent a closed system. It appears that fortresses were receiving young animals from flocks that are not completely visible in the assemblages from the fortresses themselves (Chazin 2011; Monahan 2012). This pattern is not seen in the mortality profiles for cattle from these sites (Badalyan *et al.* 2008; Chazin 2011), where many adult individuals are present (Fig. 3.4).

These patterns are not the only line of evidence for practices of assembling animals in order to participate in activities centered in the citadels. To the immediate north and east of the Tsaghkahovit Residential Complex is a group of stone enclosures that have yielded artifact frequencies significantly lower than those of the nearby roomblocks (Alan Greene, pers. comm.). Together, the roomblocks and enclosures suggest a capacity for periodically raising or gathering animals and people to participate in activities taking place within the walls of the fortified sites and in the ritual spaces. Such a staging ground provides an interesting parallel for the imbalanced pottery production referenced above. It suggests that the Tsaghkahovit Residential Complex and surrounding constructions were a place where mobile portions of the Late Bronze Age populations assembled for short periods of time, likely in order to participate in practices taking place within the walls of the fortified sites.

The final zooarchaeological pattern of note consists of the caches of cattle and caprine astragalai (ankle bones) that have been found in the ritual spaces at Gegharot. These groups have a ratio of 2:1 left to right astragalai, which bolsters their identification as intentionally crafted deposits.⁹ It has been suggested that these artifacts may have been used in practices of divination (Smith and Leon 2014).¹⁰ These enigmatic deposits, with their suggestive associations and obfuscatory silences, strongly raise the question of what role such spaces had in the political life of the South Caucasus in the Late Bronze Age. Who gathered there?

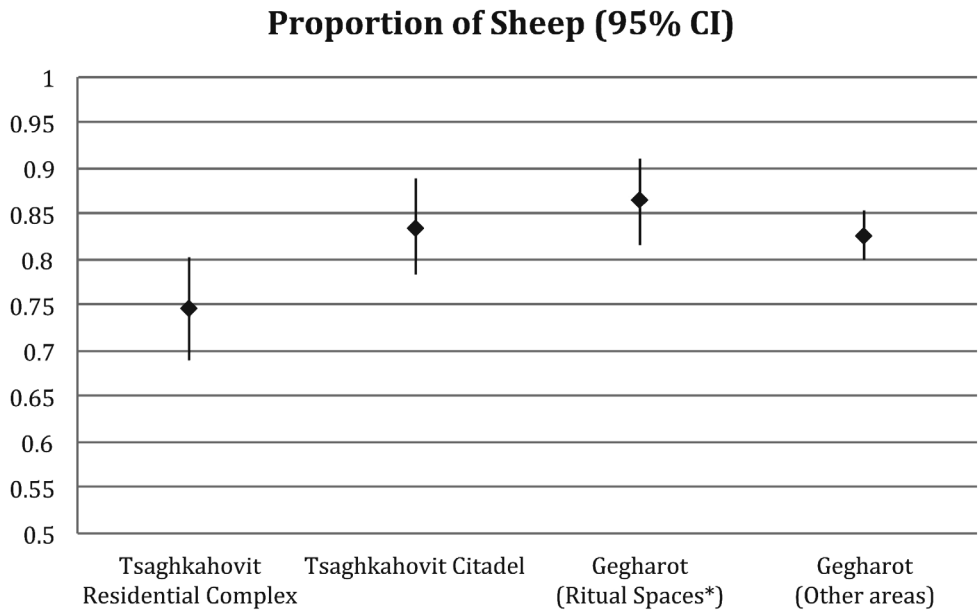


Fig. 3.2. Sheep to goat ratios (based on NISP)

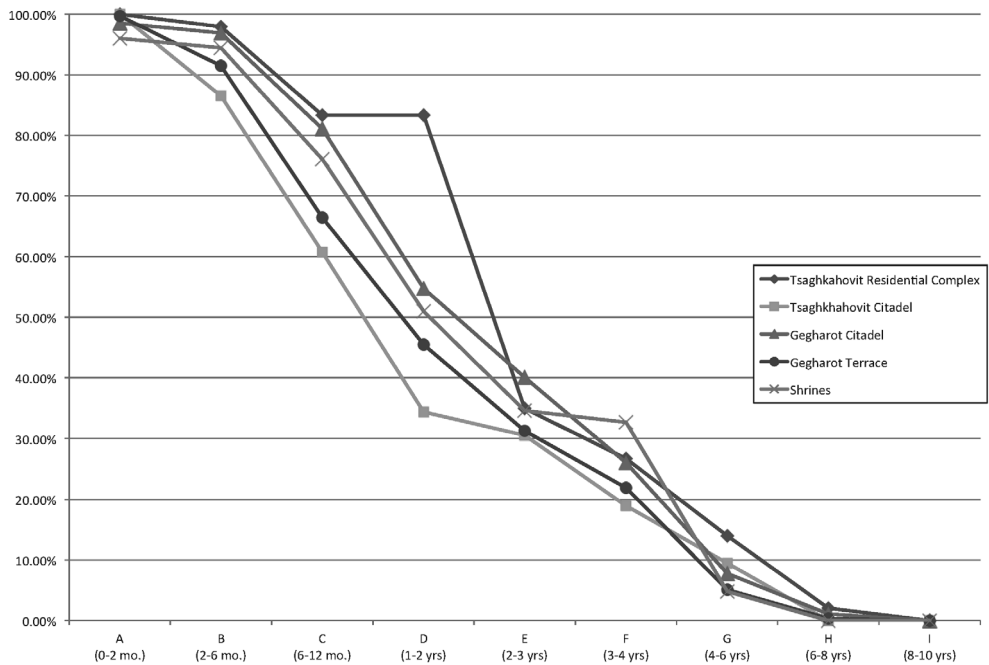


Fig. 3.3. Sheep/goat survivorship curves

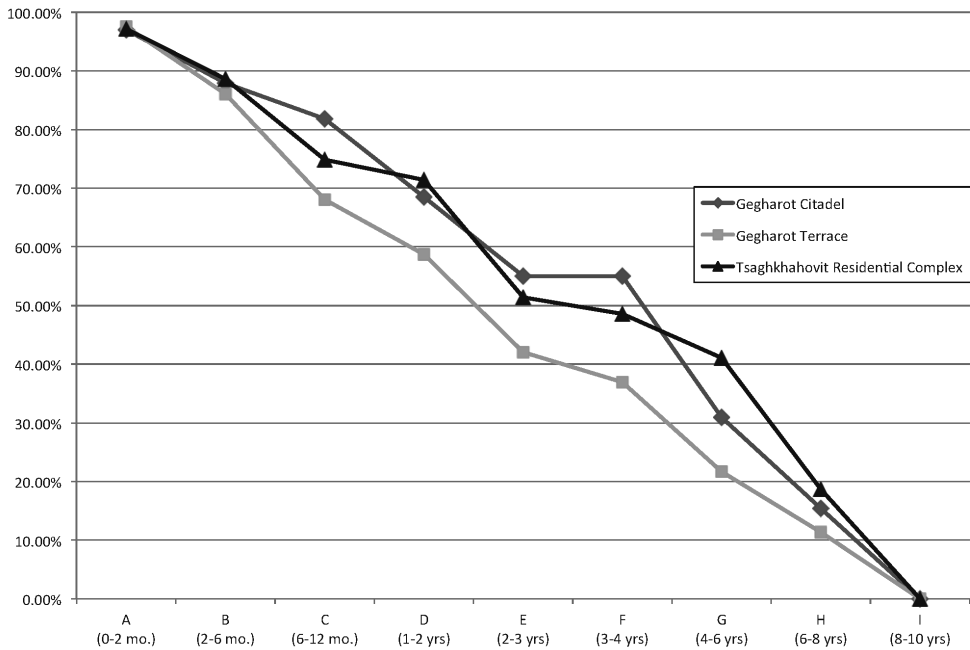


Fig. 3.4. Cattle survivorship curves

When? Who was absent or excluded? What actions were taken? For what purpose? For whom? Why were sheep involved? What specific animacy or materiality did they provide? To what symbolic, and ideological ends? I argue in the next section that taking up the question of assembling seriously suggests a productive approach to understanding what role sheep (as well as other bodies and objects) may play in political life.

Political animals: why pastoralist assemblings matter

Often, assembling functions in political theory (as well popular imaginations of politics) as either the nascent or constitutive expressions of political consciousness or action – for example, the recent occupations of Gezi Park and Taksim in Istanbul, the storming of the Bastille – or the ratifying expression of popular support or legitimacy – the People’s Assembly in Occupy Wall Street, the Scandinavian Thing (Latour 2005). But this concept of assembling ignores all the non-human *constituents* of our political lives and their roles in doing politics (cf. Thomas 1991; Latour 1993; 2005). Instead, I want to suggest that in order to understand the politics of assembling, we should focus on the assembling of people, animals, things, and landscapes as points of contingency and negotiation, and furthermore, as acts that draw upon all parts of the assemblage/assembled. In doing so, I intend to expand on the vast scholarly literature on the politics of modern assemblings. This literature deals with how modernity functions as an ideology, an imagining that is projected on the world,

through the means of a variety of practices of assembling: archives, collections, exhibitions, cabinets of curiosities, etc. (for examples, see Haraway 1984; Mitchell 1989; Thomas 1991; Stewart 1993; Foucault 1994; Pratt 2003; Franklin, this volume). However, what remains to be better understood is the politics of assemblings in non-modern times and places.

As a start, I propose that assemblings can function as arguments, ones that are made by actors by drawing on and drawing together various discourses, ideologies, people, places, animals, and things. In doing so, I draw inspiration from Severin Fowles' (2013) discussion of religion and politics in the ancient Puebloan world.¹¹ To Fowles' analysis of the politics of 'doings', I would add that the political stakes of assemblings are two-fold. First, countless assemblings produce the background of everyday, unremarkable practices of production, consumption and exchange. But, it is clear that these assemblings are hardly apolitical, even if they are, for the most part tacitly understood and undertaken. Second, assembling is also key to producing material, semiotic narratives of how things (and people) *should be*, that is, the production of discourses of power (Fowles 2013, 151). It is precisely through the interplay of these two aspects of assembling, unremarked and remarkable, that herd animals come to play a variety of roles – contingent and possibly contested ones – in creating and maintaining political authority.

Fowles' description of Puebloan ritual activities – which are referred to as “doings” by contemporary Pueblo peoples (Fowles 2013, 101) – resonates with the turn to ‘assembling’ in this volume. For Fowles, religion is not a stable, isolated domain – consisting of a set of objects and activities – but rather an action taken, an argument skillfully and forcefully *made*. Fowles (2013, 151) writes that Puebloan rituals:

do not necessarily integrate society...they are instead a kind of exegesis on worldly interconnection in which claims are made about the order of things, claims that may sometimes be designed to end quarrels but that are nevertheless always open to dispute, rejection, or revision. Doings, in other words, are explicit efforts to both mirror and assert structure, but they themselves are not structure. They are, more accurately, a discourse about structure, which is why they are also a discourse of power.

Similarly, for archaeologists, a focus on ‘assembling’ explodes the stable, bounded image of the assemblage, focusing on sets of actions – actions that sometimes are also *making* arguments – undertaken through and upon objects and bodies.

For Fowles, the main point is not that things are assembled in religious contexts, for in truth, things are assembled in much more quotidian practices as well. Rather, what is special about Puebloan religious ‘doings’ is that they are assemblings that draw heightened focus on particular forms of *relationality*. Fowles writes, “my aim is to cast light on a kind of gradient of consciousness extending from the largely unreflective use of objects in workaday activities to the heightened meditations on the radical interpenetration of things that characterized certain special contexts – contexts often referred to by archaeologists as ‘religious’ (2013, 176). I would suggest that this gradient between the remarkable and unremarkable reflects the operation of two different forms or modes of power and authority. The ‘unreflective’ assembling of things that Fowles juxtaposes against what we often call ‘religious’ or ‘ritual’ activity should not be understood as an apolitical background to the actions of social actors. As modes of power, these sorts of assemblings function precisely through their unremarkableness, shaping actions and imaginaries, but without betraying (or even actively erasing) the source or the history of such assemblings (cf. Foucault 1978;

Butler 2006).¹² While assemblings in this mode are not themselves a site of attention, the particulars of act of assemblings – the affordances that the confluences of places, people, things, animals provide – still function to direct the actions, senses, and sensibilities of participants in particular ways. In contrast, Fowles’ description of Puebloan doings suggests a second mode of assembling, one that produces a conscious ‘discourse about structure’, an argument about the everyday ordering of the world. In contrast to the ‘unreflective’ assemblings, these materially- and kinesthetically-expressed cosmological arguments rely on their ‘remarkableness’ to function as a technique of power or mode of authority, to make a persuasive argument about how things should be. In both cases, the power of such assemblings comes from “what they hide and in what, by this process of obliteration, they allow to emerge” (Foucault 1994, 137).

Returning to the data and questions about political organization in the Late Bronze Age South Caucasus laid out earlier helps trace out the logics of the argument. My argument is that both kinds of assemblings, unremarked and remarkable, were at work in the Late Bronze Age in the South Caucasus and that it is likely that conscious moments of assembly of both human subjects and pastoralist herds, centered around shrines and burials, may have been key to the construction of political authority. In this new framework, we can consider the material residues of the activities in the shrines as the result of a set of practices that argued for a particular ‘right’ way of assembling people, animals, and other components of the world, and that such practices – because they framed it as the way the world *should* be – are precisely caught up in the play of power in society, less as a ineffable substance possessed by some (kingly priests or priestly kings) and not others (commoners), and more as a set of practices that produce specific relations between different members of society, while also constituting membership in and society as such.¹³

Thus, the emphasis on sheep over goats, young over old animals, and the intentional collections of left and right astragalai found in the Late Bronze Age shrines in the Tsaghkahovit Plain might profitably be understood as: “a set of object biographies out of which has been fashioned a genealogy, a network of spatiotemporal relations” (Fowles 2012, 164), that represents a specific commentary on the world and how it *should* be: a discourse of power, one that was new and resolutely different from those that preceded it in the South Caucasus. But such an assembling necessarily takes its meaning or its stance against the background of the less-remarked assemblings I mentioned earlier. Without the everyday assembling of people and flocks – practices that resulted in the prevalence of sheep and goats in the fortresses and cattle in the Tsaghkahovit Residential Complex, the assembling of young animals in fortresses and settlements from wider-ranging flocks and the infrastructure necessary to support such movements – certain assemblings, such as those seen in the shrines and in burial mounds, would neither be legible nor effective in creating authority. Thus, moving forward, we must begin to understand the interplay between these two different ways of assembling in order to understand the impact of pastoral practices on political life.

Understood in this light, the role that pastoralists and their herds might have played in the political organization of these societies hinges less on control over human and non-human subjects’ movements or animal wealth, and more on how pastoralist assemblings were taken up in material and kinesthetic arguments located in and around the shrines. This moves archaeological (and anthropological) attention away from approaching pastoralism

as predominately ecologically- or economically-determined, leaving ‘the political’ as something necessarily separate from or layered over the fundamental base. Instead, focusing on assembling means that practices themselves – fundamentally based in, but not determined by, human, animal, and object materialities, rather than the abstractions of ecology or economy – are necessarily political. This moves archaeology out of the bind created by the modernist project of purification, which maintains strict conceptual divisions between politics, economics, and religion, and between society and nature, even as it proliferates assemblings that necessarily cross those very boundaries (Latour 1993; 2004). We no longer have to seek the economic, the political, the ideological, or even the biological in past societies. Instead, archaeologists should focus on understanding the proliferation and ramification of assemblings, keeping space open analytically for arrangements that don’t match typical Western social, economic, or even biological logics.¹⁴

What is at stake, then, in my distinction between the two forms of assembling (unremarked and remarkable)? To my mind, re-thinking the shrines’ roles in politics in this way actually ups the stakes for ritual as a political activity. No longer the (dangerous? mis-guided?) mixing of rightly autonomous domains (as the Enlightenment would have it) (Fowles 2013, 31, 66), ritual activity in the Late Bronze Age South Caucasus can be reimagined as a material discourse of power, with the attendant possibility of real, material consequences in the world. Yet, at the same time, by viewing ritual activity as a ‘statement’ or assertion of the proper order of things, rather than merely reflecting or representing social structures, it opens conceptual space for the possibility of disagreements and counter-assertions, some of which may even be archaeologically visible (Fowles 2013, 195). Another advantage of focusing on assembling, rather than sovereignty or other models based on traditional Western ideas about the political, is that the concept of assembling helps to shape archaeological interpretation at more points along the chains of inferences inherent in archaeological knowledge production. It has the potential to help bridge the gap between materially-focused methodologies and theoretically-expansive analytical approaches (Lucas 2012) in a productive manner.

So, the question to ask is: When and how are pastoralist assemblings conscious attempts to make clear the interconnections that comprise the social world, the “discourse about structure” that Fowles mentions, and when are they the un-remarked, everyday practices¹⁵ that underlie and enact those connections in the world? Certainly, this raises a real interpretative problem of deciding whether any particular assemblage falls in one category of assembling or the other, one that is only partially assuaged by an insistence on a spectrum of possibilities between the two poles. I would argue that a resolutely contextual approach, one that honestly examines that production of the archaeological assemblages and assembled knowledges involved, has a fighting chance of making real headway, as is clearly demonstrated by Fowles’ work (2013), among others (cf. Russell and During 2006; Orton 2010; Porter 2012).

Lastly, I want to note the particular purchase that this distinction between two types of assembling gives for the study of pastoralism. It enables a view of the human-animal relationships involved, inherently tied to material bodies and objects involved in practices and processes, in a way that makes it harder to slip into economic or environmental determinisms. It focuses attention on the particular *affordances* that pastoral practices create, through the interaction of human beings mediated by their relations with different domesticated herd species. These affordances arise out of the interplay between the material (biological) properties of species of domesticated animals and the social and institutional arrangements

of human society.¹⁶ It allows us to more easily consider that herd animals might have a certain ‘agency’ or ‘efficacy’ (Latour 1996; Ingold 2007; Bennett 2010) that shapes how pastoralist practices (and the human-animal relationships on which they are based) relate to political organization. In essence, in distinguishing between these two different modes of assembling, marked and unremarked, we are better able to understand the specificity of pastoralist assemblings, and likely others as well.

Notes

- 1 This emphasis on ‘natural’ population structures is in part a legacy of zooarchaeologists who trained primarily as zoologists, as well as ongoing conversations between some zooarchaeologists and paleobiologists, who are concerned with ‘natural’ or ‘wild’ populations (Reitz and Wing 1999, 1–20; Bartosiewicz 2001).
- 2 Key to this, is the ‘ethology’ – the proclivities and activities of particular species, their ‘species being’, often reductively categorized as ‘behavior’ – of particular species involved in relations of domestication. This aspect has been addressed both in the animal studies literature as well as in the archaeological literature on animal domestication (O’Connor 1997; Haraway 2003; 2008; Lorimer 2006; Russell 2007; 2012; Hamilakis and Overton 2013).
- 3 It is important to note that interaction does not necessarily imply any intentionality on the part of participating entities.
- 4 Furthermore, this conception of the herd as contingent and socially constructed is not necessarily limited to herds of domesticated animals. Lulka’s (2004) study demonstrates how changing policies of bison herd management in Yellowstone National Park relies on a particular conception of the bison herd – as a reservoir of genetic diversity, rather than as a collection of sentient individuals – based in conservation and biological paradigms of knowledge. This knowledge, while shaped by scientists and wildlife management officials encounters with bison, also shapes the herd itself. Bison in the park have responded to these ongoing efforts at management in a variety of ways, often thwarting the desires of park officials (Lulka 2004, 454). Despite the different circumstances, it is clear that even wild herds can represent particular sets of human-animal relationships, requiring different assemblings and different forms of labor (material, intellectual, affective). Lulka writes, identifying a particular intellectual, affective labor of conservation biologists and landowners, “Seeing genes rather than seeing animals is the first step in neutralizing attempts by nonhumans to interact with the surrounding environment.” (2004, 446). Haraway (2008, 59) and Raffles (2010, 172–3) also discuss the links between scientific study and care. For discussions related to the affective labor in dealing with domesticated herd animals, see Lorimer (2006), Russell and Düring (2006) and Mlekuz (2007; 2013).
- 5 *A la Bourdieu* (1987).
- 6 This conclusion has been drawn on the basis of stratigraphy from excavations and geophysical survey at the Tsaghkahovit Residential Complex, and the presence of a larger number of burials in the plain than would be expected, given the size of the settlements (Smith *et al.* 2009, 398; Lindsay *et al.* 2010, 26).
- 7 It is unclear to what extent the walls surrounding the site served a defensive function, though it is worth noting that the citadel at Gegharot burned twice during its occupation in the Late Bronze Age (Badalyan *et al.* 2008, 69).
- 8 There is less evidence available from the site of Tsaghkahovit, as the later Iron II occupation greatly disturbed Late Bronze Age deposits on the citadel (Badalyan *et al.* 2008, 74). The discovery of a butter-making vessel on the western terrace at Tsaghkahovit is suggestive (Smith *et al.* 2004, 14).
- 9 These apparently ritual deposits of animal remains are mirrored in the inclusion of animal bones in mortuary deposits. Animals are incorporated into mortuary deposits both as sacrifices and as feasting remains (Monahan 2012; Marshall 2014).

- 10 This assertion is based on ethnographic analogy with games and divinatory practices using astragalai from a variety of ethnographic examples from across Eurasia (Gilmour 1997).
- 11 One of Fowles' goals is to destabilize the easy division between politics and religion, and the temporal politics that it abets, that is inscribed in much scholarship on religion (2013, 2, 36). It is his attempt to do a "post-secular archaeology of pre-modern religion" (2013, 4) that initially caught my interest. His dissatisfaction with the way in which power and hierarchy are addressed in discussions of Puebloan religion and society (2013, 60–7) echoed my own frustration with how to integrate the enigmatic Late Bronze Age 'shrine' deposits with my previous research on the political economy of pastoralism.
- 12 In the Western tradition, this move to erase the history of assemblings is often effected through making claims about what is 'natural', claims that require vast assemblages to support the production of such 'common sense' (cf. Latour 1993; 2004). One can imagine, however, in other times and places that assemblages used other discourses to re-produce or erase histories in the service of making power and authority.
- 13 Fowles' use of the metaphor of circuitry (2012, 54) seems apt, especially in the emphasis on the relationality between parts of the system (or the assemblage) and the capacity to re-work both the architecture and the flows it enables.
- 14 This is in tandem with the need to remember and explore how our own scientific production of knowledge is indebted to and imbricated within those very same social, economic, and biological logics, which are themselves produced by historical and contemporary assemblings.
- 15 Something along the lines of Bourdieu's (1977) *habitus*, perhaps?
- 16 This conception of the relation between human beings and their herds is inspired by the literature on theories of materiality, which emphasize the importance of material objects in shaping our social world (Latour 2005; Knappett 2005; Ingold 2007; Keane 2010; Bennet 2010).

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4.

Assembling identities-in-death: miniaturizing identity and the remarkable in Iron Age mortuary practices of west-central Europe

James A. Johnson

This chapter explores the conventional understanding of funerary assemblages as both a priori and/or a posteriori constructs, allegedly knowable through empirical observations of mortuary practices. Too often mortuary studies in archaeology present the burial rite and funerary “assemblage” as unproblematic end results, the successful combination of intentional social actions that form material totalities that were full expressions of an individual’s lifetime. I examine the problems with this scenario focusing specifically on how mortuary practices are extensions of bureaucratic work of identifying the deceased for the living. At the same time the deceased individual acts as a locus for institutional practices assembled and presented by archaeologists in an attempt to both constrain, if not outright control, interpretive outcomes. I critically review the broader theoretical trends in archaeology regarding the juxtaposition of identity and identification. Such juxtapositions have contributed to the perpetuation of monolithic analyses and interpretations of the social too often regarded as complete and/or direct correlations of identities-in-life. I use assembling as my theoretical foundation to more critically explore identities-in-death as expressed during early Iron Age funerary mortuary practices from west-central Europe. I suggest that these mortuary practices were in fact moments steeped in the identification, assembling, and presentation of the miniature. These practices produced miniaturized individuals so as to allow for carefully architected experiences and scenes of the remarkable to be presented and carried away in the memories of the living.

KEYWORDS: IRON AGE EUROPE, MORTUARY PRACTICES, ASSEMBLING, MINIATURIZATION, IDENTIFICATION

The title of this volume implicates archaeology in long-standing traditions of treating the assemblage as complete or finished. Even as the meaning of the term ‘assemblages’ is renegotiated under the banners of political ecology (Bennett 2010), complexity (De Landa 2006), community (Harris 2012), and history, contingency, and reflexivity (Fowler 2013a;

2013b), much of the discipline of archaeology remains resistant to (re)conceptualizing the assemblage as fundamentally incomplete and always in-process. A focus on *assembling* emphasizes the productive overlap between ideas, places, time, people, things, and discourses to explore the nature of process and its constitutive and always-active role in the creation of social worlds (Franklin *et al.* in the introduction to this volume).

The goal of this chapter is to challenge the idea of funerary assemblage as a complete, unshakable totality through a focused exploration of how identities-in-death were assembled and subjected to dismantling and reassembling in Iron Age mortuary practices of west-central Europe, producing what Susan Stewart (2007) calls the ‘remarkable’. Funerary assemblages are often presented as directly corresponding to the identity of the deceased individual. Because these assemblages are buried with the dead, the identities of the deceased individuals are often presented in publications as not only completed, but concretized. To further dismantle the funerary assemblage as completed and concretized projects of identity construction, this chapter reconciles the processes of identification and miniaturization as projects of governance with the ongoing assembling and performance of late Hallstatt/early La Tène Iron Age funerary practices in west-central Europe, c. 650–400 BCE.

Identification and identity? A case for miniaturization

The relationship between identification and miniaturization is rarely a blip on the radar screens of many, if not most, archaeologists. Identification itself has fallen prey to more aggressive ontologically-centered studies of identity, including gender and personhood (e.g. Fowler 2004; Joyce 2004; Meskell and Preucel 2004; Casella and Fowler 2005). In fact, Eleanor Casella and Chris Fowler (2005) advocate for a substantive move beyond identification to a focus on theorizing social identity as polysemic and mutable. Chris Fowler (2005, 109–110) states that citations of identity:

can be seen as attempts to temporarily accentuate particular features of identity, rather than to simply reflect a fixed individual identity of a deceased person. Since identities are never truly fixed, it would also be unreasonable to expect archaeological identification of such identities.

Lynn Meskell and Robert Preucel (2004, 122) note that:

identity as a processual phenomenon, rather than a set of taxonomic specificities, may be one way to ameliorate the polarities and bring the debate to a closer understanding of how our individual identities congeal or are solidified over our lifetime as a dynamic practice of marking difference.

What is to be resolved here is how we define (and use) identity and identification in relational terms. Identity, in all of its polysemy and mutability, centers on how individuals in their partible or fractal nature define and assemble themselves (Strathern 1988; Fowler 2005). For Andreas Glaeser (2000, 9–11) identity is “the meaning of the self to itself or to another” and is situated in moments of reflexive challenges to our own ontological security or confidence as we question and (re)interpret ourselves in our movement through and/or engagements with numerous interactive and meaningful contexts.

Identification is the work through which identity is found and formed. Whereas Andreas

Glaeser (2000, 9–10) places identification under the broader rubric, if not outright control, of identity, I find it useful to unshackle the two. If we understand identity to be driven by self-understanding and subsequently self-expression, then identification is the engine that fuels the epistemology of the self. At the same time, however, identification moves beyond just self-understanding and definition to the interoperable nature between different contexts in which the self and other engage, and subsequently how we are understood outside of ourselves by others. Identification highlights *our* own uninterrogated conceptualization (and assumptions) of ideal types as “rational constructs that develop in dialogue with empirical case material” (Glaeser 2000, 13), and should lead to reflexive approaches that deal with different timings and scales of context and engagement between the self and other. In other words, the approaches that we use need to be able to account for agency and temporality in the work of identification, allowing for the wiggle-room of contingency.

In our haste to remove ourselves from the taint of the positivist-derived processual archaeologies of 1970s and 1980s, we have become overly reliant on non-reflexive and what I argue are relatively uncritical understandings of identity-as-ontology. These understandings pay lip service to mutability but in fact often abandon mutability in favor of the sometimes tacit and other times explicit congealing or solidification of identity. Or, if identities are never fixed (an identification in itself) and are resistant to archaeological identification then archaeologists can never truly grapple with the shifting ontologies of identity, nor the movement of or changes to things, people, ideas, and discourses through time and space that actively and passively constitute identity. As a logical result, identity would then be beyond our capacity as archaeologists to investigate. What I would like to suggest here is that what archaeologists actually grapple with is identification in terms of *how* we define *ourselves* even as we seek to identify others in the past. For instance, in the contexts of burials how individuals are identified by others, and importantly for the work of identification, how they are constituted and (re)presented in the grave are of crucial importance. In this instance, we can better understand identification as a multi-scalar process entangled in multiple temporalities and materialities – always drawing on historical materials and projecting, if not insinuating, itself into future work while being used or manipulated for specific goals in the present. Which brings us to miniaturization.

If identity is never fixed as Chris Fowler (2005; 2013a) suggests then it is always ongoing and becomes increasingly gigantic in scope. He further states that it may be more productive to focus on how identities were subjected to contexts of interaction, transformation, and manipulation (Fowler 2005, 110). I want to add that identification as always in-process means that the contexts with which Chris Fowler is grappling in fact were moments and acts of identification: that the presentation of and change to a person’s identity could not (and should not) be usefully separated from their identification by persons architecting that particular context. Such architectures of identity, and changes to them, make the work of identification correspondingly and appropriately gigantic; if identity is really assembled as a *mélange* of relational ontologies then the ultimate goal of identification is developing a better understanding of the forces that go into the production of (re)presentation of identity. I argue that this really can be done through understanding the move between what Susan Stewart (2007) terms the gigantic and the miniature.

Susan Stewart (2007, 86) indicates that the relationship between the gigantic and the miniature:

[The gigantic] is represented through movement, through being in time. Even in the ascription of the still landscape to the giant, it is the activities of the giant, his or her legendary actions, that have resulted in the observable trace. In contrast to the still and perfect universe of the miniature, the gigantic represents the order and disorder of historical forces.

For Stewart (2007, 71) the gigantic is best related to the landscape in the sense that we are in it, and that our most immediate understanding of nature is as it surrounds us. For Stewart the gigantic can only be understood partially, primarily in terms of our engagements with it. In her presentation of the relationship between the gigantic and the miniature she used the metaphor of containment to highlight the interactive nature between the two: the gigantic is the container while the miniature is contained (Stewart 2007).

The miniature – as time, space, and meaning condensed and highly resistant to change – evokes the sensual although being primarily visual in its agentive capacity to “make its context remarkable; its fantastic qualities are related to what lies outside it in such a way as to transform the total context” (Stewart 2007, 43–6, 71). Perhaps even more importantly for this chapter is Susan Stewart’s (2007, 68–9) claim that the function of the miniature cannot be separated from a nostalgia for craft and that such nostalgia presents a smaller and thereby more easily manipulated “version of experience, a version which is domesticated and protected from contamination.” In the following sections, I use identification as the lens through which we can better explore how the move between the gigantic and the miniature with the end result being the presentation of the ‘remarkable’ were assembled as state-based projects of governance. I argue that movement through the always-socially partial understanding of the gigantic, i.e., everyday life, to the successively miniaturized and architected moments of transcendence expressed in remarkable deaths were all assembled as deliberate, and politically-steeped, moments of aggregate identification in the Iron Age societies of west-central Europe.

The gigantic in the Iron Age: society, landscape, and movement

Conventional interpretations of social organization in the late Hallstatt/early La Tène Iron Age of west-central Europe (France, Germany, Switzerland, etc.) are based primarily on the appearance of trade/exchange systems with societies located along the Mediterranean coast, large hillforts, and ostentatious burials (Arafat and Morgan 1994; Arnold 1995; 2011; Dietler 1995; 2010; Wells 2001; Fernández-Götz 2013; Fernández-Götz and Krauß 2013). Resultant models of west-central European Iron Age social organization center their investigative focus on the presence of varying degrees and kinds of elites (Fig. 4.1). Two of the most recent models, Bettina Arnold’s (2011) and Manuel Fernández-Götz’s (2013), are important additions as they move away from the underlying notion of ‘princes’ and instead engage with different scales of governance as their key focal point for investigating social relations in the European early Iron Age.

Manuel Fernández-Götz (2013, 42–53) suggests that the central thread that ran through much if not all of early Iron Age socio-economic and political relations was clientship. For him (Fernández-Götz 2013, 42) such relations were entangled in a system of obligation and reciprocity. This system then spurred the often cited notion that early Iron Age elites were

Kahrstedt 1937-38	Sangmeister 1964	Zürn 1970	Spindler 1983	Arnold 1991	Muller 1994	Fernández- Götz 2013
Overlords	Knights	First Rank	First Rank	Governing Elites	Upper class	Civitas
		Second Rank	Second Rank	Non-Governing Elites		Pagus
	Free Peasants		Free Peasants		Middle Class	Extended Families
Wretched	Smallholders	Domestics/ Farmhands	Privileged Class	Nonelites		Households
			Subordinate Class		Lower Class	
	Poor/ Unfree		Thralls	Nonpersons		

Fig. 4.1. Table of models for European Iron Age social organization

competing over economic and social resources leading to increasingly ostentatious displays of personal wealth and power leading to a *civitates*-type system of organization (Wells 1980; 2001; Arnold 1995; 2011; Fernández-Götz and Krauß 2013). Manuel Fernández-Götz (2013, 44–5) notes that the *civitates* system was equally a political and ethnic system as membership and participation consisted of both aspects. In this system, he states that power emanated from both politics and identity, and that both had to be continually reaffirmed. He concludes that *civitates* were a collective made up of powerful ethnic, socio-economic and political identities that were dynamic and always in-process (Fernández-Götz, 45, 61).

Bettina Arnold (1991; 1995; 2011) emphasizes the role of governance by categorizing the right or ability to govern or be governed through status focusing on: Governing Elites, Non-Governing Elites, Ordinary Persons, and Non-Persons. Furthermore, she suggests that such a model of status-based sodalities accentuates the material symbols that signal membership within specific groups and status within that group (Arnold 1995, 45–7). More recently, she calls into question the nature of wealth-based status as the use of sheet-gold and bronze sheets were used to convey an image of high status, while hiding the actual degree of wealth an individual had (Arnold 2011, 160–1). Moving beyond conventional projections of social structures, the inherent materiality of such displays indicates fairly rigid forms of shared group material expression and understanding: forms of overt and/or covert participation within broader social, if not imagined, communities (cf. Anderson 2006; Franklin and Johnson, n.d.).

Bettina Arnold (2011) and Manuel Fernández-Götz (2013) both note that among the living populations of the early Iron Age in west-central Europe, there were few noticeable internal markers of social distinction and/or differentiation. Outside of the hillforts that were undoubtedly ‘central places’ and common to this period (cf. Fernández-Götz 2013), there were few conspicuous places that were as effectively assembled, and once assembled, as potent in the social imaginary of the gigantic as early Iron Age mortuary landscapes. Rather

than focusing myopically on the equations that have been the historical underpinning for many models of early Iron Age social organization, i.e., wealth = status, I focus on how the presentation of the miniature and the remarkable acted as powerful moments of carefully architected identification. To do this, I fold Bettina Arnold's and Manuel Fernández-Götz's ideas on governance, false advertising, and identities-in-aggregate into a discussion of how the sociological order of early Iron Age societies in west-central Europe centered on and was perpetuated by the movement from the gigantic to the miniature.

Mortuary landscapes and the construction and use of burial mounds

For the late Hallstatt/early La Tène Iron Age of west-central Europe, if not more broadly, mortuary landscapes and their composite burial mounds are often used as key components in the identification of power, status, and identity (Riek 1962; Frankenstein and Rowlands 1978; Spindler 1983; Biel 1985; 2009; Pare 1992; Arnold 1995; 2001; 2002; 2010; 2011; Wells 2001; Schneider 2003; Hanks 2008; Fernández-Götz 2013. Fernández-Götz and Krauß 2013; Johnson and Schneider 2013; Garstki *et al.* 2015). Such interpretations of mortuary landscapes and burial mounds contribute to and perpetuate the idea that power and identity are deliberately emplaced and concretized. Instead of emplacement and concretization, the movement through the mortuary landscapes of Iron Age Europe generated transitory, if not transcendent, and memorable experiences of the journey from life to death, signaling the movement between worlds – the gigantic lived world to the miniaturized world of the dead.

If travel from the early Iron Age hillforts to their associated mound groups was organized along the lines of where people lived, i.e., the inner or outer areas of the hillforts, then the assembling of the crowd was structured accordingly between inner-first and outer-last principles. Such an assembling of the crowd would have positioned the population according to kin and family groups, socio-economic status and, possibly, political differentiation. Interestingly, many hillforts have numerous associated burial mound groups. For instance, the Heuneburg in south-west Germany has at least three, if not four, burial mound groups including the Gießübel-Talhau, Roßhau, and Speckhau mound groups. Fairly standard distances, 2–3 km, were travelled by the living as well as by the dead as they moved from one place to the other (Fig. 4.2).

Similarity in distances from the hillfort to each burial mound group may have been important initially as it provided a (roughly) standardized time and experience of travel to each mound group. However, at the Heuneburg this changed drastically by around 540 BC when the Gießübel mound group was constructed much closer to the hillfort. Nevertheless, these travels were increasingly potent acts of assembling as tumuli were often placed in groups and arranged geometrically, allowing the procession to parade past the already dead while at the end of the journey the recently dead could be counted among their predecessors and/or ancestors (Arnold 2010; 2011, 165) (Fig. 4.2).

The repeated nature of these journeys can be identified in the physical structure of the mounds themselves. The construction and use phases of the Hohmichele, as well as Tumulus 17 and Tumulus 18 (T17 and T18, respectively) of the Speckhau mound group (the latter

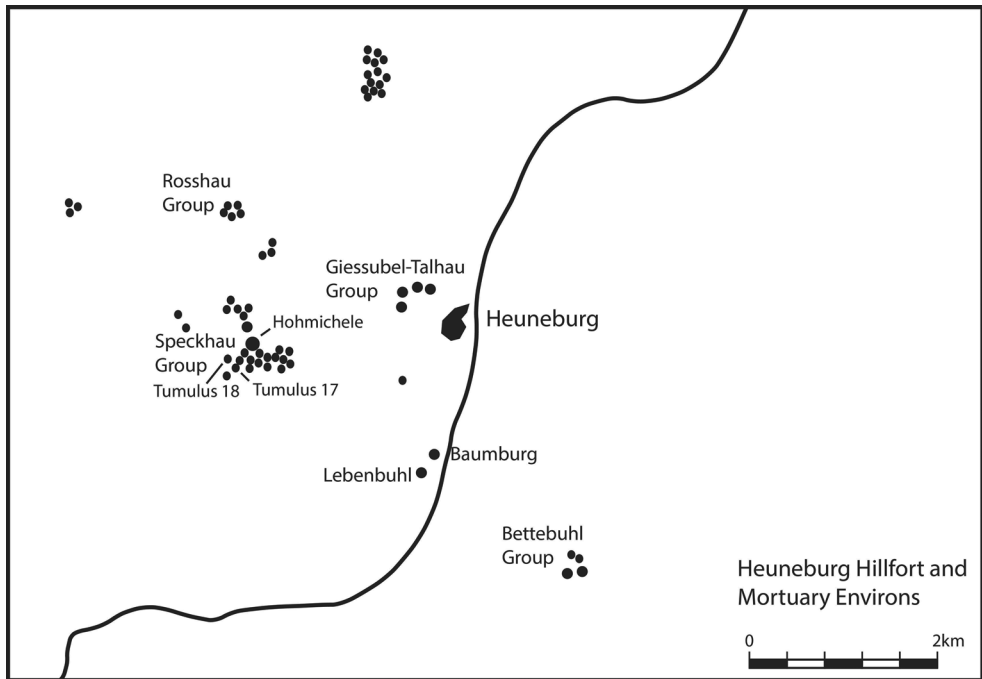


Fig. 4.2. Map of the Heuneburg hillfort and its mortuary landscape (after Johnson and Schneider 2013)

two excavated between 1999–2002 by the Landscape of Ancestors (LoA) project directed by Bettina Arnold and Matthew Murray), attest to the diachronic, ongoing assembling of materials and meaning in early Iron Age burial mounds in west-central Europe (Fig. 4.3). The complex stratigraphy of these mounds consists of multiple layers of soil with varying thicknesses and different colors. The Hohmichele, the second largest burial mound in this region of Europe, exhibits a number of strata that express the long-term use of the mound, as well as to its socio-political and ritual investment by local populations. At least three ancient surfaces were readily identified during excavation as the remains of three wooden platforms, numerous charcoal features, and stone offering places (Kurz and Schiek 2002; Riek 1962).

For Tumulus 17, the stratigraphy begins with the mound core including strata 1–3 (out of five) covering the central burial. These strata were followed by Stratum 4, a layer of grey clay 70 cm thick that was homogenous, i.e., contained little else than the clay, and was most likely meant to protect the central burial. Stratum 5 was composed of charcoal mixed with bone and early Iron Age pottery fragments located closely to the outer edges of the mound, with many of the pottery sherds showing evidence of burning (Arnold 2002, 138; 2010; Schneider 2007; Johnson and Schneider 2013). Similar to the Hohmichele, small stone offering places were identified during excavation of T17 (Schneider 2003; 2007; Arnold 2010; Johnson and Schneider 2013).

Bettina Arnold (2010) notes that mounds T17 and T18 each was used for roughly 250 years, or 700/650 BC to 450/400 BC. As noted above, the periodic construction and use of small stone altars that were associated with specific stratum, while being covered over and

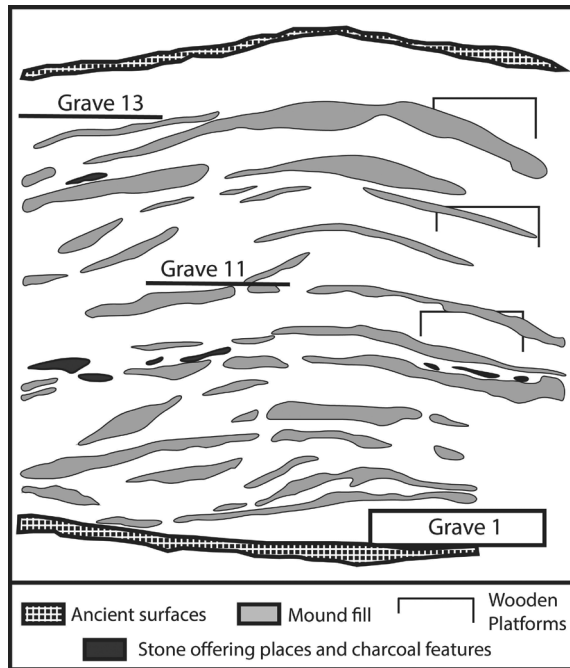


Fig. 4.3. Profile drawing of the Hohmichele tumulus (after Kurz and Schiek 2002)

protected *in situ* by the addition of later layers, indicates the reuse and continued importance of these mounds. Such practices appear fairly widespread with evidence appearing at the Hohmichele and Roßhau Tumulus 4, while other votive practices show up such as the offering of hair, food vessels, and other items outside of T18, the Hohmichele, and other mounds (Arnold 2010). In addition, various early Iron Age tumuli (or their immediate environs) contain evidence of the staging of funerary performances in the form of wooden platforms, areas that contain evidence for pyrotechnics, and for later smaller-scale and successive audiences the construction of small stone altars or offering places as noted above (Schneider 2007; Arnold 2010; Johnson and Schneider 2013). While we often think of burial mounds such as early Iron Age tumuli as ‘complete’ due to the capping as noted for both the Hohmichele and T17, it is clear that tumuli were always incomplete and in process as the addition of layer upon layer signified the ongoing assembling of structure and meaning for each tumulus.

Furthermore, the pattern of individual burials in the Magdalenenberg tumulus near Villingen seen in plan view or top-down in Figure 4.4 indicates the deliberate concentric placement of individual burials in an ongoing project of assembling the dead, and/or possibly ancestors, during the early Iron Age of west-central Europe. Unlike the Speckhau and other mound groups, the Magdalenenberg tumulus appears to have been an isolated mound though one of large proportions at 8 m high and 102 m in diameter (Spindler 1983). Such concentric patterning in the placement of individuals in tumuli also appears in T18 of the Speckhau mound group and Tumulus 1 in the Gießübel-Talhau mound group, both associated

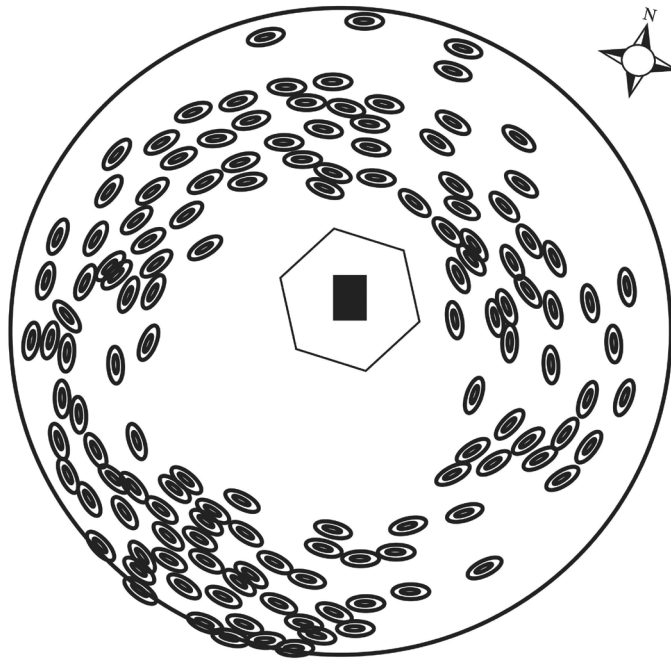


Fig. 4.4. Plan view of the Magdalenenberg tumulus (after Arnold 2010)

with the Heuneburg. Bettina Arnold (2010; 2011) notes another pattern in the placement of individuals in different quadrants of the Hohmichele and T17, as well as Tumulus 4 of the Gießübel-Talhau group (of which Tumulus 2 was completely leveled and 3 was only partially excavated).

The construction and use of burial mounds with numerous additions over several hundred years indicate: (1) the identification with the dead by movement to and through the various mound groups; (2) continual investment into the mortuary landscape by the addition of layers per mound, additional mounds in mound groups, and more mound groups in the landscape; and (3) the importance of repeated visitation for locals for purposes of burial and other rites including ancestor veneration. All three points attest to the importance of the mortuary landscape in the social partialities of the Iron Age gigantic – that visitation to these mounds for purposes of interment of the recently deceased acted as moments of cohesion. The ‘guided’, if not forced, movements between the worlds of the living and dead mirror what Michel Foucault (1978) calls “discipline” or what Susan Stewart (2007, 102) terms the “abstractions of institutions.” The movement through mortuary landscapes themselves fed into the relationships between the great and the small, while simultaneously shedding light on the ongoing and in-process nature of late Hallstatt/early La Tène sociological orderings. What is needed now is to develop a better understanding of how the dead became miniaturized and remarkable through careful architecting of the grave, accompanying mortuary ritual, and treatments of the body including grave placement and dress.

The miniature and the remarkable in Iron Age mortuary practices

After all, the dead do not dig graves and bury themselves (Parker Pearson 1982; 1999). Nor do they dress and present themselves for associated funerary rites. In Susan Stewart's (2007, 44–6, 61–4) description of the book and the dollhouse, we find heuristics of the miniature as she points out (at least) four relevant points: (1) that the miniature book calls attention to itself as a total object; (2) the depiction, or description, of miniatures within the book; (3) the doll house has two primary motifs: (the appearance of) wealth and nostalgia; and (4) the ability of the miniature to create an 'other', transcendent time as well as be presented as balanced. The idea of the miniature as briefly sketched here is deeply entangled in the multiple temporalities of identification, in terms of the historical conditioning and the implications for futurity.

The implications of using the miniature to explore, or explode, the funerary assemblage as moments and acts of assembling are very clear. In the four points noted above it is altogether too tempting to posit a similar breakdown of the grave as miniature. As such, we can see that: (1) the grave as something opened and shut calls attention to its aggregate, if not incomplete nature; (2) what the grave contains is left open to description (and identification) as a way of knowing the grave's materiality; (3) the grave and its contents are subject to classifications if not expectations of wealth and memory; and (4) the ability (or post-mortem agency) of the grave, including the deceased, to create a transcendent time not only for the deceased but also for onlookers as the imagination is called upon to open the doors into the afterlife.

At the same time, we should question the authenticity of the image or scene before us. Bettina Arnold (2011, 159) notes the possibility for 'false advertising' among early Iron Age burials, including some of the best known burials of the late Hallstatt period of the European Iron Age, such as the burials of the Hochdorf 'prince' and the Vix 'princess' (Fig. 4.5). The Hochdorf burial was lavish in the numbers and kinds of grave goods interred with the male individual, including: cloth garment, conical birch hat, pointed shoes with gold leaf on top, necklace with amber beads, neckring or torc made with gold leaf, two gold serpentine fibulae, a sheet gold bracelet, a wide belt plaque with sheet gold decoration, a bronze dagger decorated with gold leaf, small bag made of cloth that contained three large iron fish hooks with fishing line made from horse mane, a nail clipper, two wooden combs, an iron dagger, a quiver containing fourteen arrows, a drinking horn made of iron sheet, eight smaller drinking horns made of auroch horn, a large bronze cauldron, a small drinking cup made of sheet gold, a four-wheeled wagon, a maple yoke, decorated harnesses, a set of three bowls, nine bronze dishes and plates, an axe, an iron knife, a branch of antlers, numerous wall hangings, an imported bronze bench or kline with anthropomorphic figurines as wheels, and a badger hair blanket (Olivier 1999, 113–5). Laurent Olivier (1999, 115) assembles the goods by activity such as: (1) body care; (2) hunting; and (3) feasting and drinking. The inclusion of burial goods that had gold leafing, or gold sheeting, but not actually composed of gold indicates that in the preparation of the burial, those responsible for its presentation had a design in mind, a specific idea on what to place where to guide the vision of the living during the rites (Wells 2012), with the end result a carefully crafted memory to be taken away.

Certainly this was not just happening with male burials, despite the predominant focus

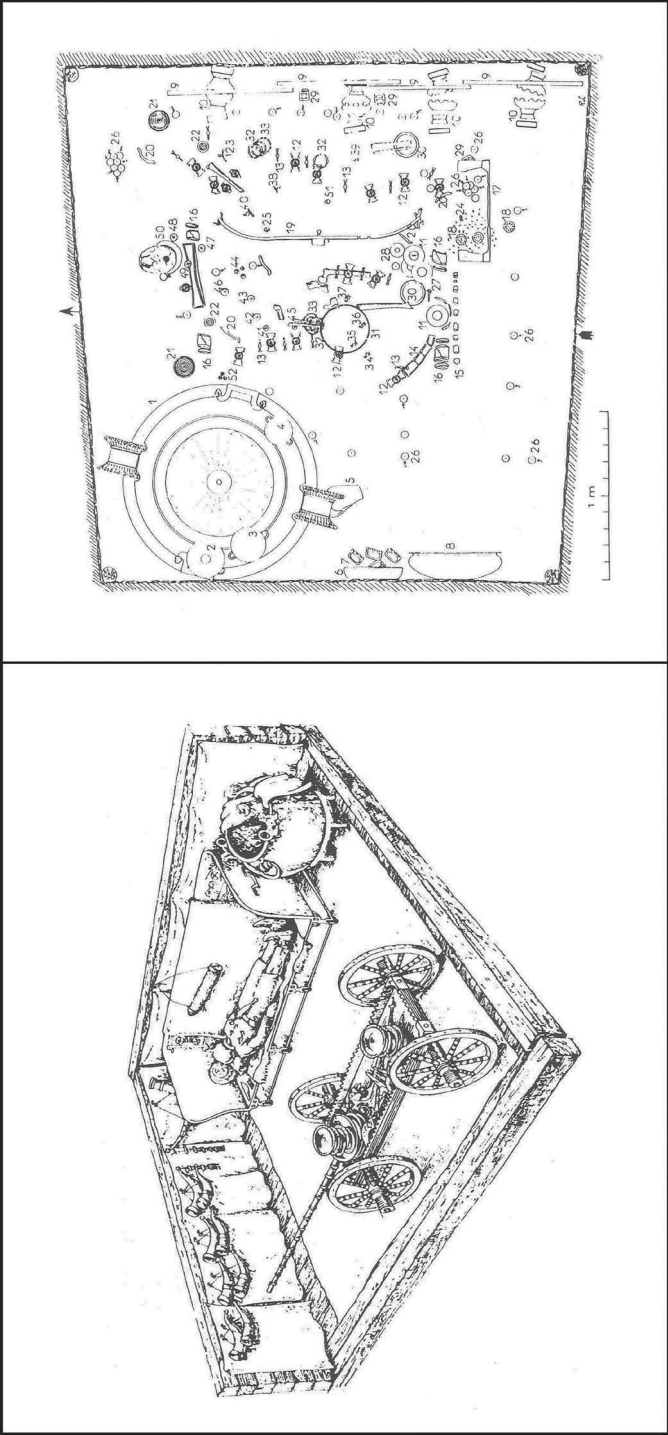


Fig. 4.5 Reconstruction of Hochdorf (from Biel 1985) and plan view of Vix (from Arnold 1991; Joffroy 1962)

on ‘warrior’ beauty and agency by some scholars (Treherne 1995; Hanks 2008). Equally well known, and drawn upon as an example of an extremely wealthy elite burial is the later, c. 500–450 BCE, Vix burial. Comparatively, the Vix burial seems more lavish in its grave goods, which included: a large bronze *krater*, a silver bowl, two black figure *kylixes*, imported black burnished bowl, bronze basin with handles, bronze basin with interlaced decoration, a *schnabelkanne* (bronze pitcher), bronze anklets, belt circlet, jet bracelets, amber bead bracelets, fibulae, gold neckring or torc, amber beads, decorative stone beads, bronze ringlets, and a disassembled wagon (Arnold 1991, 367–9). Interestingly, despite what would normally be clear and conventional indicators of status and wealth (imported goods, torcs, wagon), numerous (male) archaeologists have sought to ‘explain away’ the anomalous nature of the Vix princess (Spindler 1983; Knüsel 2002). As intriguing, and yet problematic, as the broader relationship between gender and identity still remains, I am more interested at the moment in the relationship between identification and the miniature. For instance, the bronze *krater*, 5 ft 4 in (1.63 m) in height and weighing some 450 lb (c. 204 kg), was imported and subsequently assembled possibly in place. The thinness of the *krater* walls and the use of bronze rivets, which would not have completely sealed the wall edges, for its reassembling, calls into question its actual use and thus its use as a symbol of wealth and status may be more important than any actual functionality. No matter whether it functioned as a *krater*, a vessel used for mixing wine or water, or as a symbol of wealth and prestige, the Vix burial had equal if not more potency than the Hochdorf in the deployment of symbolic capital in maintaining and reinforcing the sociological order of Iron Age west-central Europe.

Tumulus 18 of the Speckhau mound group, with its multiple burials, provides further insight into the relationship between identification and the miniature in early Iron Age mortuary practices in west-central Europe, if not more broadly. Grave 13 of T18 most likely contained a female individual with several bronze fibulae (or brooches), two bracelets, a neck ring, small jet and glass beads, amber beads, larger glass beads, a small bronze ring, miniature fibula, and other bronze fragments (Arnold 2012, 101–2). At the same time, numerous burials in this mound contain bronze staple-decorated leather belts with bronze plates, hollow bronze ball/ball-headed pins as well as band earrings or hair rings (Arnold 2012, 101–3). Perhaps even more intriguing is Grave 1 from T17 that Arnold (2012, 102–3) notes contained a sword, iron belt hook, two long spear points, iron plume clamp, and a bronze cauldron. Arnold (2012, 103) suggests that the sword has its closest parallels with Iberian *falcata*, a machete-type sword, and that the bronze cauldron is similar to the two found in the Gießübel-Talhau mounds (1 and 2), all of which seem to fall after 540 BC. Bettina Arnold also suggests that the non-local helmet and swords indicate that (1) the individual gained these items through trade or exchange; (2) the individual traveled to the geographic locale and obtained the items; or (3) the individual was a foreigner. Despite the chronological separation between Grave 1 and other burials from T17, as well as those from T18, it seems clear that these burials, from the Speckhau mound group as well as the Vix and Hochdorf burials, were presentations of individuals that included goods that would act as materials bound in the multiple temporalities of identification, of their use in history by the deceased and their use now as what Andy Jones (2001) and Howard Williams (2006) term ‘technologies of remembrance’.

These burials certainly evoke impressions of the remarkable and fantastic through their presentation of wealth, prestige, and nostalgia by the sumptuous nature of the grave goods.

Susan Stewart (2007, 46) suggests that the miniature has the “capacity to make its context remarkable; its fantastic qualities are related to what lies outside it in such a way as to transform the total context.” Given what Bettina Arnold (2011) says about the possibly false nature of these displays in terms of exaggerated wealth and perhaps status (following Cannon 1989), it seems clear that early Iron Age burials were acts of identification rather than expressions of ‘pure’ or ‘true’ identities. The grave goods themselves, as Laurent Olivier (1999) notes, can be assembled according to different themes. As aggregates these burials express a superficial sense of finished totalities, or lives fully lived. This holds true for the Vix burial as well as those of the Speckhau mounds. Yet, these burials themselves were only small cogs in the gigantic late Hallstatt/early La Tene political machinery. More importantly for the living, was the (hidden or masked?) sociological ordering of this period that seems to have had no direct correlation with everyday life, and that only found expression in the miniaturized world of the dead. The remarkable then became salient anchor points for the living as they carried away memories of the funerals that reinforced the extant social order.

The miniaturization of the miniature: the importance of sherds

Tumulus 17 of the Speckhau mound group is an important site for something beyond the burial of the (alleged) foreigner/traveler. Between 1999 and 2000, the Landscape of Ancestors project implemented an excavation strategy that targeted the inclusion of pottery sherds in different phases of mound fill, or strata, of T17. Through careful excavation sherds were recovered from each strata of mound fill. As a part of his (U.S.) master’s thesis, Seth Schneider (2003) conducted a ceramic refit analysis of the sherds and pottery found in the mound. He discovered during the course of his refit analysis a direct connection between sherds from Feature 45 of the central grave chamber and sherds from Stratum 5/Feature 10, separated by approximately 150 years (Schneider 2003, 165–7; 2007; Johnson and Schneider 2013, 247). Given that there was no evidence for mixing of strata in T17 the provenience of the sherds seems secure.

The focus here is on the sherd’s indexical ability to move between or transcend time periods, and to identify with a historical moment of importance. Seth Schneider (2003) suggests that the movement of sherds between time periods and strata was representative of curation practices. In addition, James Johnson and Seth Schneider (2013) state that these practices were important expressions of belonging and of historical legitimacy. In reference to the miniature and the remarkable, the sherds were able to bridge 150 years between use events in the mound but also indicate careful curation as the sherds were representative of the whole vessel as well as the construction of the central burial chamber and the interment of its occupants.

Conclusion

Such practices, moving from the hillforts to the mortuary landscape, the ‘disciplined’ movement through the mortuary landscape, the deliberate placement of burials in different

mounds, the inclusion of grave goods that did not necessarily, and probably were not meant to, form a cohesive assemblage, and finally the use of materials such as the T17 sherds attest to the importance of the movement from the gigantic to the miniature in the late Hallstatt/early La Tene period of the European Iron Age. From quotidian life that exhibited very little sense of differentiation or distinction to the remarkable and fantastic burials of the Hochdorf, Vix, and the Speckhau burials, identification and miniaturization seem to have been important, if not crucial, components of life and death in the early Iron Age of west-central Europe.

Furthermore, processes of identification and miniaturization appear as highly susceptible to manipulation in the Iron Age. Whether or not burials were contexts for direct expressions of wealth, status, or even identity, it seems clear that we, as archaeologists, have to be more reflexive in our use of funerary assemblages as static indices. Given the relatively recent focus on the use of memory, as well as multiple temporalities (Dawdy 2010; Johnson forthcoming), the funerary assemblage and identities-in-death should be re-thought and re-assembled as ongoing political projects that are always incomplete and in process.

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5.

Assembling animals: actual, figural, and imagined

Adrienne C. Frie

What possibilities are there for understanding how animals were conceptualized in prehistory, and what modes of practice, relationships, materials, and bodies were implicated in such conceptions? Here I would like to add to the ongoing discussion of assembling as a contingent, complex, and open-ended project by investigating how interactions with, representations of, and ideas about animals were brought together in mortuary ritual in the Early Iron Age of south-eastern Slovenia. I discuss the remains of animals, depictions of animals, and animal artifacts at the Iron Age tumulus cemetery of Brezje pri Trebelnem and make the case that the conceptual and physical interactions with animals both living and materialized indicate the process of assembling pasts and futures through mortuary practices and performances. I argue that to engage fully with the evocative potential of animals, the focus should not be animals as objects being acted on, but the multiple ways in which animals were engaged with. Animals were encountered, interacted with, and imagined in everyday life, and these multi-temporal encounters were constantly assembled and reassembled to provide meaningful interpretations of and engagements with the world. Meaning was created and recreated constantly throughout life in the interface of humans, animals, and materials, and enacted in the specific context I discuss here – mortuary ritual. In these funerary events the conceptions and experiences of the community were brought to bear in the performance of an appropriate burial ritual, as participants constructed the present and imagined a potential future for the deceased, as well as for themselves.

KEYWORDS: ANIMALS, SLOVENIA, IRON AGE

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of, and ideas about animals were brought together in mortuary ritual in the Early Iron Age of south-eastern Slovenia.

The intriguing aspect of assemblages is that despite their often heterogeneous nature, we usually presume that the elements encompassed by them were brought together by something beyond random chance. This characteristic has spurred extended philosophical investigations of how groups of materials, forces, elements, and wholes come together to create an aggregate (Deleuze and Guattari 2004; Bennett 2005; 2010; Fowler 2013a; 2013b, 2) – the assemblage is “a becoming that brings elements together” (Wise 2011, 91). In this volume we are again moving forward, from interrogating the nature of the assemblage itself to the practice of *assembling* as a vibrant, meaningful, and constantly incomplete process. In this contribution I utilize Jane Bennett’s (2005, 445, fn 2) definition of the assemblage:

An assemblage is, first, an *ad hoc* grouping, a collectivity whose origins are historical and circumstantial, though its contingent status says nothing about its efficacy, which can be quite strong. An assemblage is, second, a living, throbbing grouping whose coherence coexists with energies and countercultures that exceed and confound it. An assemblage is, third, a web with an uneven topography: some of the points at which the trajectories of actants cross each other are more heavily trafficked than others, and thus power is not equally distributed across the assemblage. An assemblage is, fourth, not governed by a central power: no one member has sufficient competence to fully determine the consequences of the activities of the assemblage. An assemblage, finally, is made up of many types of actants: humans and nonhumans; animals, vegetables, and minerals; nature, culture, and technology.

This definition provides a starting point to explore the practice of *assembling*. The editors of the volume define assembling as “processes through which pasts, truths, totalities, and facts are revealed as fundamentally unfinished, ongoing and ever in the process of becoming” (Franklin *et al.* this volume). Here I will focus on a particular form of assembling – human intervention in assemblages to create or reinforce systems of meaning. This is not to deny the role of non-human animals, plants, or other materials and forces in assembling; however, as an anthropologist I am interested in the way that humans creatively manage and conceptualize their world, navigating their own entanglement in assemblages and negotiating the momentum of assembling.

The case study explores how Early Iron Age peoples of the Dolenjska Hallstatt culture of south-eastern Slovenia assembled ideas about animals and lived experiences with animals, and how these experiences and ideas were cited and modified with the inclusion of animal bodies and animal iconography in burials. During funerary activities participants constructed the present by assembling experiences, ideas, people, materials, and a monumental funerary landscape, and simultaneously imagined a potential future for the deceased and for themselves. Through these practices of assembling pasts and futures in the construction of their present, the community “constructed the context for [its] own reproduction” (Garstki this volume). The assembling involved in a funerary ritual framed the possibilities for future funerary events by citing past practices and maintaining their relevance in the present. A particular subset of funerary activities that assembled animal bodies, imagery, and ideas about animals expressed the daily experiences with and ideas about animals, and briefly crystalized these conceptions to create a repertoire of ritualized human–animal interactions.

The practice of assembling

The beauty and difficulty of the concept of the assemblage (*sensu* Bennett 2005; 2010) is that it is open-ended, constantly in flux, and nearly impossible to capture analytically. While inclusive enough to do justice to the intricate interrelations that mark the physical and social world, the size and complexity of assemblages may make them analytically unwieldy. In this chapter I utilize an anthropocentric approach to assembling as a heuristic to investigate the complex systems of meaning that past societies constructed for themselves.

The wide distribution of non-human agency or “effectivity” in Bennett’s concept of assemblage is compelling but also analytically problematic (Bennett 2010, 23), especially for an archaeologist trying to locate key variables at work in a past assemblage. Simply stated, when there are potentially innumerable factors acting in/on an assemblage, determining the most pertinent becomes difficult and depends on the perspective of the analyst (Burstrom 2014, 78). In an attempt to negotiate the analytical complexity of the assemblage I focus explicitly on human agency in *assembling*; that is, how human actors may utilize certain elements of assemblages to manage and reconfigure preexisting systems of meaning. This approach facilitates an explicit investigation of the way that humans individually and collectively negotiate the assemblages in which they are entangled, and create, negotiate, and actively manipulate assemblages in practice. I recognize that I am setting up a false dichotomy between humans and non-human forces in assemblages; however I believe that this dichotomy serves to focus attention on particular nodes at which assemblages are creatively managed and negotiated by human actors. The other actants that Bennett identifies, “nonhumans; animals, vegetables, and minerals; nature, culture, and technology” certainly affect the form, trajectory, and future possibilities for assembling (Bennett 2005, 445 fn 2). However, as a human being, I have no frame of reference to understand the possibilities, limitations, or content of non-human intentions or meaning. For this reason, in this chapter I will focus solely on human actors in assembling.

The editors here propose that assembling is always incomplete (Franklin *et al.* this volume), so what are the temporal repercussions of this idea – what does incompleteness mean for pasts, presents, and futures? A focus on how different temporalities are managed and impact human acts of assembling provides an entry point to addressing the importance of *incompleteness*.

Assemblages are historical, since they are constituted by their past relationships and interconnections (Fowler 2013a, 244). Many elements of assemblages may be enduring and entangled in relations of variable duration. Material objects may foreground the temporality and duration of the relationships that characterize assemblages beyond the present moment (Fowler 2013a, 241). Assemblages, interrelationships, and even pasts are constantly unfolding (*contra* Bennett 2010, 24), and they are only ever perceived as complete from a particular perspective that characterizes the past as set and done (Franklin *et al.* this volume). Assemblages are the past constituting the present, which ultimately frames the possibilities for the future (Wise 2011, 100–101; Fowler 2013a, 243):

The past does not lie behind us, like some older state of things. It lies ahead of us, with us ... It is a collection of vestiges constantly undergoing change, and our view of it is constantly being altered, at once different and identical. Its history involves repetition, which is simultaneously continuation and interruption. Material creations – objects, sites, landscapes – die once they

cease undergoing change. And then our memory of them dies. As the material continuation of the past is handed down, it is necessarily altered. Any history that posits that the past is different from the present, that it is incomprehensible outside of the specific context of its time, is meaningless. It destroys the past. (Olivier 2011, 9)

In terms of assemblages, there is no past that is not still present. But what does this mean for the concept of assembling, of human intervention in assemblages?

Archaeologists have long recognized that the communities we study recognized and strategically utilized their pasts – from reclamation, reuse, and replication of monuments and materials (Williams 1998; Lillios 1999; Bradley 2002; Caple 2010), to maintenance and citation of past practices and activities (Mizoguchi 1993; Last 1998). I propose that in some cases practices of assembling creatively drew on the variable rhythms and duration of relationships that characterize assemblages, which allowed strategic manipulation of activities in the present as actors attempted to construct an idealized future. The present case study focuses on how quotidian interactions with animals, figural representations of animals, and monumental landscapes were assembled during mortuary practices and created a more durable configuration of human–animal relations and ideologies. These practices of assembling both drew on and ultimately affected the temporality and duration of human–animal and human–human relationships.

Assembling animals

Archaeological studies of human–animal relations construe the remains of interactions between humans and animals as far more than records of subsistence (Crabtree 1990; de France 2009; Russell 2012). Human–animal studies highlight the social nature of such interactions and their particular cultural logics, allowing a more nuanced investigation of the varied relationships between animals and humans (Arbuckle 2012, 302, 311).

Just as animals are essential to aspects of social life beyond economics or subsistence, representations of animals are also socially potent. Depictions of animals were an important mode of expression in the Dolenjska Hallstatt culture, and the representations I discuss here were entangled in recursive relationships with those producing and consuming them as part of the materialization of concepts, ideologies, and social identities (Bailey 1996, 291; Alberti 2001, 194; Aldhouse-Green 2004, 2, 8; Mlekuž 2007, 278; 2013). The evocative qualities of these images align them with what we consider art which – as Christopher Roberts (2011, 889) states:

simultaneously exists in both physical and metaphysical states ... Interpretation can therefore be argued to function as the connection of current sensory experience to previous encounters viewers have made throughout their lives, which occurs in precisely the same way Bourdieu suggests the *habitus* functions.

Representations are particularly interesting acts of assembling as they cite and emerge from extant assemblages, but also enter and recursively affect a multitude of other assemblages.

Assembling meaning in funerary performances

The bodies, offerings, materials, and ideologies mobilized in a funerary event were anchored in a suite of past practices and knowledge that also structured possibilities for the future (Pollard 2001, 328; Boulden 2011, 112; Boyd 2014, 194). These practices gained as well as expressed meaning through their citation of past mortuary practices (Johnson and Schneider 2013). Practitioners and participants were familiar with these practices from personal and culturally situated experiences that structured acceptable forms of grief and community reconfiguration after the loss of an individual (Boulden 2011, 118).

Mortuary ritual in particular is “an assemblage of things and discourses about the past and present” (Angelo 2014, 274), that also draws on imagined futures for the deceased and the community while establishing reference points for future ritual. In the present case study burial within large mounds where other deceased community members were interred meant that each burial physically referenced those individuals who had gone before (Barrett 1990, 183; Mizoguchi 1993). Each new burial comprising an individual and attendant ritual was assembled into preexisting networks that encompassed community, memory, space, time, and ritual practice (Johnson and Schneider 2013). Not only was the deceased incorporated into preexisting assemblages, but the enactment of funerary ritual represented a distinct event of assembling individuals and materials:

The knowledges mobilized and articulated through these materials entail moments of use, exchange and production, each moment of material action linking the living to the dead, the past to the present, collectively mobilized with the intention of burying the dead. (Boyd 2014, 196–197)

The enactment of these funerary rituals at monumental burial mounds (tumuli) allowed the manipulation of time itself – their physical permanence and embodiment of the past was suggestive of futures: they have lasted, thus they will continue to last. The assembling of individuals, materials, ideologies, and monuments not only anchored present ideologies in the past through citation of earlier practices, but also gestured to possibilities for the future (Bradley 2002; Munn 2004, 11). These practices of assembling strategically positioned individuals and resources, creating a reference point for future action (Barrett 1990, 183; Boyd 2014, 197). But what was the role of animals in these assemblages? How did these funerary practices involving animals assemble pasts, presents, and futures for human–animal and human–human relations?

Animal bodies, artifacts related to animals, and representations of animals were assembled in mortuary practices, citing other assemblages that included these elements as well as particular interactions with and conceptions of non-human animals. The role of animals in mortuary activity was distinct from, and yet informed by, the quotidian interactions with animals that included care for domestic animals as well as observation of and engagement with local animals. However, mortuary practices assembling animals were not common events – while death was a part of life, it did not occur every day (Boyd 2014, 194). Inhumations in a tumulus that included animals or representations of animals were particular events for the Dolenjska Hallstatt peoples. Mortuary practices involving animals were meaningful for their purposeful citation of daily life and interactions with animals, ideologies related to qualities of animals, and deployment of animal resources for the intended future of the deceased and the community. This is not to say that the use of animal references in funerary

contexts was a straightforward reflection of Iron Age human–animal relations; however, these references were anchored in lived experiences with animals and local ideas about animals.

Assembling animals at Brezje pri Trebelnem

The Dolenjska Hallstatt culture is archaeologically identified with the Early Iron Age (c. 800–300 BCE) of south-eastern Slovenia, in the modern regions of Dolenjska and Bela krajina. Iron Age peoples in this region utilized domesticated cattle, pig, sheep, goat, horse, and dog but they also made use of wild game in ways that clearly were not directed primarily toward subsistence (Bökönyi 1974, 433–6; Green 1992, 44; Bartosiewicz 1996, 30, 33; Križ *et al.* 2009, 25–7; Arnold 2010). The representations of a subset of animals on certain artifacts, in contrast with the primarily geometric motifs used on other objects, suggest that the selected animals were ideologically significant (Turk 2005, 24; Bakarić *et al.* 2006, 11; Križ *et al.* 2009, 138–9). I discuss the Iron Age tumulus cemetery of Brezje pri Trebelnem to illustrate that remains of animals and animal iconography were meaningfully deployed in assembling pasts and futures and ultimately impacted systems of meaning.

The transition to the Iron Age, typified by the Eastern Hallstatt cultural complex, witnessed rapid change with the introduction of iron technology, population aggregation at large hillforts, the increasing elaboration of social hierarchies, and the shift to cremation and inhumation burials under large tumuli (Gabrovec 1976; 1999, 150–70; Mason 1988, 212; Dular 1993; 2003; Tecco Hvala 2012, 41, 47–8). The widely accepted explanation is that the majority of the Dolenjska Hallstatt tumuli were family barrows (*Sippenhügel*) (Gabrovec 1966, 14, 43; 1974; Teržan 1980/1, 119–22; 2008, 191; Murray and Schoeninger 1988, 156; Mason 1996, 12; Dular and Tecco Hvala 2007, 126, 247; Tecco Hvala 2012, 41, 80). However, despite the probable kin-based orientation of tumuli, there is still significant heterogeneity in the grave goods deposited with the deceased, and it has been proposed that this was a stratified society, with regional power centered at hillfort sites (Teržan 1985; Mason 1996; Križ *et al.* 2009, 89–90; Tecco Hvala 2012, 378–84).

The site of Brezje pri Trebelnem is a collection of five tumulus cemeteries near the village of Trebelno, associated with the Early Iron Age hillfort site of Karlin (Fig. 5.1) (Kromer 1959; Dular and Križ 1990; Dular and Tecco Hvala 2007, 175–6). Several tumuli at Brezje pri Trebelnem were excavated by Jernej Pečnik in 1894 and 1895, and the finds were sent to the Natural History Museum in Vienna (Kromer 1959, 7–9). Pečnik was a prolific excavator but did not publish his notes. The Brezje finds were not fully published until 1959 when Karl Kromer reconstructed Pečnik's excavations at Brezje. This publication was later supplemented by an article by Janez Dular and Borut Križ in *Arheološki vestnik* (1990), which reassessed Pečnik's original notes and letters and made some corrections to Kromer's account of the excavation. There are significant distinctions between the tumuli despite their contemporaneous use, especially in the use of animal bodies and depictions in mortuary practices. Of the ten tumuli excavated by Pečnik, only four contained artifacts with animal iconography, and only one of these had animal remains noted in the excavation records (Kromer 1959).

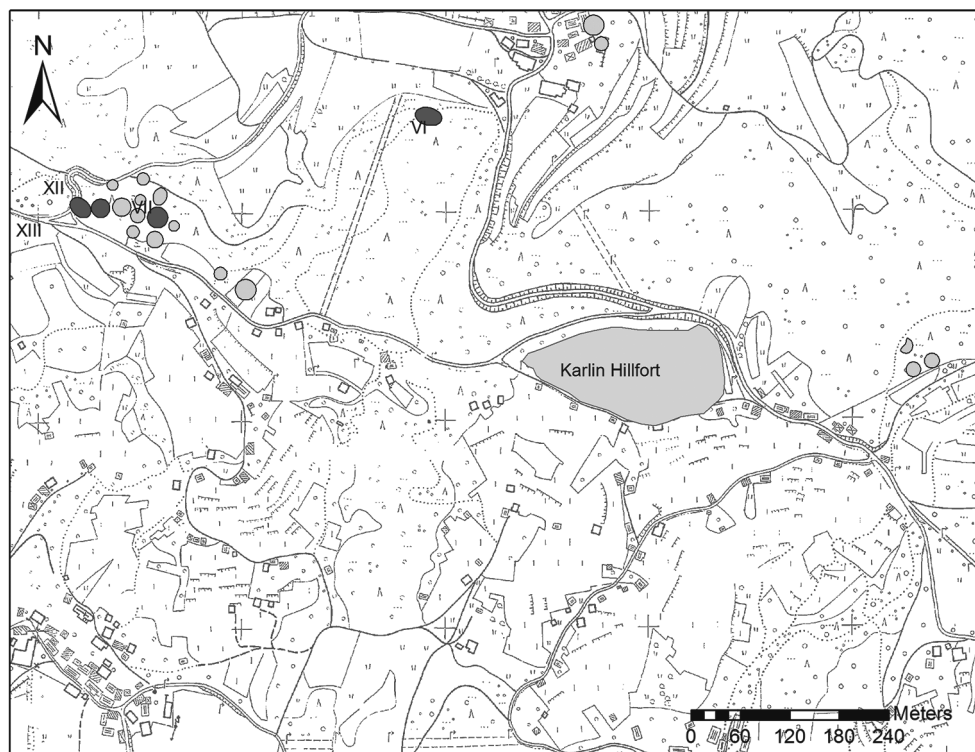


Fig. 5.1. Early Iron Age Brezje pri Trebelem: the hillfort of Karlin surrounded by tumuli (modified from Dular and Križ 1990, 532 Beil. 1; Dular and Tecco Hvala 2007, 176 fig. 100)

Tumulus VI

Tumulus VI had as many horse burials as human burials at the time it was excavated, though Pečnik believed it had been previously disturbed so the original ratio may have been different (Dular and Križ 1990, 535, 537). There were only six graves in the tumulus, a small number for this area, and four contained horse remains, which is also highly unusual since no other horse burials or partial horse remains are known from Brezje (Kromer 1959, 21; Dular 2007, 737). Grave 1 contained a probable male¹ buried with a bridled horse near his head (Kromer 1959, 21, pl. 17; Bökönyi 1968, 16; Dular and Križ 1990, 535, 537; Dular 2007, 737), and has been interpreted as a warrior burial because it included an iron spearhead, iron awl, and bronze cauldron, as well as the bridled horse (Kromer 1959, 21; Dular and Križ 1990, 537). Grave 2 contained the burial of a horse with no human skeleton but with two iron spearheads commonly associated with male burials in this period (Kromer 1959, 21, pl. 52; Bökönyi 1968, 16; Dular and Križ 1990, 535, 537; Dular 2007, 737). Though the excavator recorded only one horse burial for each of these graves, when Dr Sándor Bökönyi (1968, 16) analyzed the remains for his seminal work on Iron Age horses, he determined that there were actually the remains of three horses interred in these two graves, one represented only by a fragment of a right radius. It is unclear if part of an additional horse was deposited in one of the graves, or if in the process of excavation and

curation the material became mixed. Grave 3 also contained only a horse burial, this time with no associated finds (Kromer 1959, 21; Dular and Križ 1990, 537; Dular 2007, 738). Grave 5 was an inurned cremation of what was probably a male based on the associated grave goods. Cremated horse remains were mixed with the human remains within the urn. These cremated horse remains have not been preserved, but their presence is supported by the finds of bridle parts associated with this grave – 15 large decorative bronze discs along with hundreds of bronze knobs (Kromer 1959, 21, pls 18–19; Dular and Križ 1990, 535, 537). This grave also included three ceramic vessels, a bronze spear and an iron spear, an ax, a *fibula* (dress pin), and an additional ceramic vessel decorated with bronze rivets (Kromer 1959, 21; Dular and Križ 1990, 537). Though horse burials are known not only from this site but also surrounding regions, the unique outfitting of the burials in Tumulus VI at Brezje are notable (Dular 2007, 746; Kmet'ová 2013). While horses buried without human remains may signal the graves of exceptional horses that died from natural causes, those interred with humans likely were sacrifices. The horses in Grave 1 and Grave 5 were accompanied by harnesses marking them as steeds. The inclusion of such noble animals distinguished Tumulus VI, which was set apart from the more traditional tumuli at the site both spatially and ritually (see Fig. 5.1) and provides evidence that at Brezje it was not only humans who were considered worthy of burial in a tumulus.

Tumulus VII

Three of the 46 graves in Tumulus VII contained artifacts with animal representations. Grave 1 contained four bronze Certosa fibulae, two of which had horse heads on the fibula foot, as well as a hollow bronze torc, two bronze anklets, two iron axes, the remains of a belt composed of a bronze belt plate and bronze belt rings, 30 glass beads, and a bronze ram's head bead (Kromer 1959, 22–3; Dular and Križ 1990, 538). The gender attribution of the deceased is ambiguous, since bronze torcs are associated with women and children in this region, while pairs of axes are associated with males (Tecco Hvala 2012, 122–3, 274–81), and there are no osteological remains for sex determination. The ram's head bead is unusual since ram's head beads are otherwise known only in glass and are strongly associated with female graves in the Dolenjska culture (Egg 2010, 539). Grave 12 contained a matched pair of bronze fibulae representing waterbirds and two bronze bracelets (Kromer 1959, 24–5). Grave 35 contained a bronze fibula representing a bird and an additional bronze fibula (Kromer 1959, 27).

Tumulus XII

Out of 81 graves, only two graves in Tumulus XII² contained artifacts depicting animals (Kromer 1959, 11, 15, 17, pls 7, 9; Dular and Križ 1990, 535). The most notable of these is a composite helmet from Grave 37, with two birds or winged hybrid figures (Fig. 5.2) (Kromer 1959, 15, pl. 7.2). This helmet was interred on the knees of a probable male individual in Grave 37, along with ten amber beads³ (Kromer 1959, 15; Dular and Križ 1990, 541). Grave 67 contained two bronze fibulae, one with the head of an indeterminate animal⁴ represented on the foot, one spindlewhorl, 15 loom weights, glass beads, bronze knobs, and a ceramic vessel (Kromer 1959, 17; Dular and Križ 1990, 541). The inclusion of the spindlewhorl and loom weights indicates that this was likely the burial of a female individual.



Fig. 5.2. Sheet bronze helmet from Brezje pri Trebelnem Tumulus XII, Grave 37 (image courtesy of the Naturhistorisches Museum Wien)

Tumulus XIII

Of 54 graves in Tumulus XIII, four contained the most varied artifacts representing animals. Grave 6 is the burial of a probable adult female, buried with a bronze drum-shaped pendant with suspended attachments depicting avian figures (Fig. 5.3). This grave also contained a bronze fibula, two bronze anklets, two bracelets, two earrings, 12 glass and 38 amber beads, and two clay vessels (Kromer 1959, 29–30, pl. 35; Dular and Križ 1990, 542). Grave 8 had a repaired belt plate that portrayed only animals, though it is difficult to interpret because of significant repairs that obscure the original design (Kromer 1959, 29–31, pls 36–7; Dular and Križ 1990, 542). This belt plate comprised four parts from what were originally two different belt plates riveted together. From left to right, the first panel shows the back legs of a possible carnivore,⁵ with a bird on its back. The next piece is the hind part of an ungulate, with the leg of another ungulate above it. The final figural panel shows a stag, likely a red deer based on the morphology of the antlers (Fig. 5.4; Kromer 1959, 30–1, pl. 36.5; Turk 2005, 49). That the repair obscures the original design and that two separate belt plates were combined seem to indicate that it may not have been the design that was of central importance at the time of the repair (Turk 2005, 23, 49). Also deposited in this grave were the associated bronze belt attachments, an iron socketed axe and two iron spearheads, two bronze Certosa fibulae, and three ceramic vessels (Kromer 1959, 30–1; Dular and Križ 1990, 542; Turk 2005, 49). Grave 30 contained a footed vessel as well as a separate ceramic appliqué in the shape of a bull's head with pronounced horns (Kromer 1959, 34; Dular and

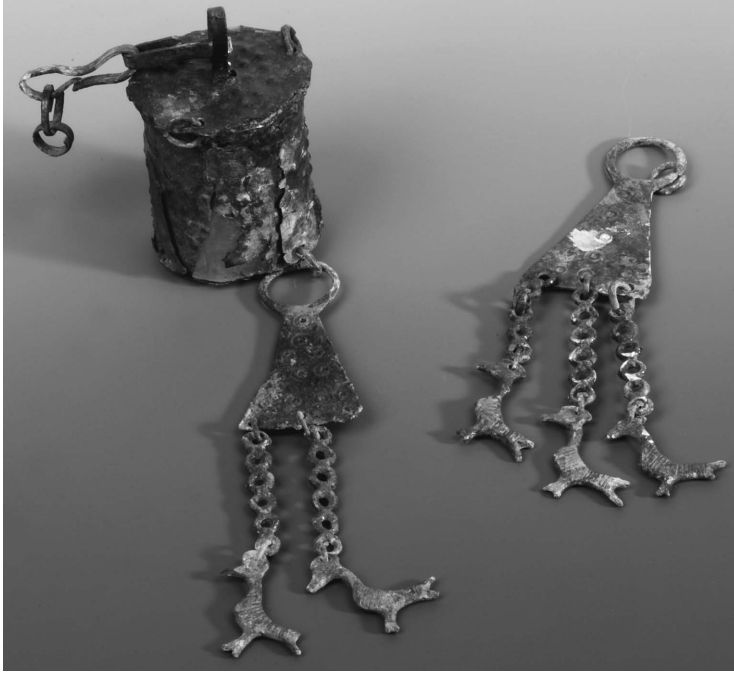


Fig. 5.3. Sheet bronze pendant with avian attachments from Tumulus XIII, Grave 6 (image courtesy of the Naturhistorisches Museum Wien)

Križ 1990, 543). Grave 49 was probably the inhumation of a male individual and contained a bronze belt plate and belt rings, two iron spearheads, an iron knife, a bronze spur, two bronze animal-head fibulae,⁶ a ceramic vessel, and six bronze trilobate arrowheads (Kromer 1959, 35; Dular and Križ 1990, 543).

Discussion

Funerary activity physically manages a body, but at the same time it also serves to mediate the changed relationships within the community that now has one less living member. Communities are assemblages themselves, as “interweaving relations between people, things, places, landscapes, animals, and plants” (Harris 2013, 173). Acknowledging the varied interrelationships that mark communities allows a clearer perspective on the necessity of citing a diversity of materials, experiences, ideologies, and relationships – including human–animal relationships – in funerary activity. Brezje pri Trebelnem was a potent site for the assembling of ideas about, attitudes toward, and interactions among humans, animals, and materials. This funerary assembling was carried out through the selection and modification of elements of certain assemblages (assemblages of human–animal interactions and materials, assemblages of representational artifacts, community assemblages, etc.). In the model of community as assemblage, the death of a community member would be

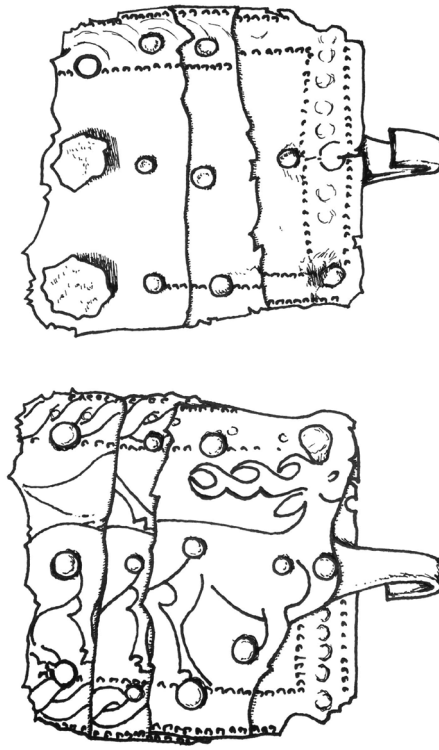


Fig. 5.4. Sheet bronze belt plate from Tumulus XIII, Grave 8 (redrawn after Kromer 1959, pl. 36)

particularly disruptive, and (re)assembling was necessary. The assembling of particular people, ideas, animals, and materials was necessary during funerals to maintain equilibrium or to productively renegotiate community ties.

Tumulus VI was distinguished by horse burials rather than any artifacts depicting animals. Each horse burial was distinct, perhaps indicating that these burials were an expression of the particular relationships between the deceased individuals (or the community) and these individual animals. In Grave 1 the horse wore a bridle and was interred with the “warrior,” while in Grave 2 the horse was interred with spearheads, reinforcing the martial associations of horses at this site. Horse gear was also associated with weaponry and defensive gear in these graves, and it may be that funerary rituals purposefully referenced the horse as a participant in combat through the assembling of particular individuals, horses, horse gear, and weaponry. Grave 3 was also solely a horse, in this case with no grave goods. This should not be dismissed as simply the disposal of a large body after the horse’s death. The inclusion of this horse in this particular tumulus with three other horses and associated males indicates that this was a meaningful choice with reference to past and continuing mortuary rituals at this locale. Grave 5 is also unique. Cremation is less common in this period, and the cremation of a horse would have been a notable sensory experience acting on the sight, sound, smell and feel of intense heat radiating from a massive, long lasting fire (Williams

2004, 271–3). Despite the morphological changes that mark cremated skeletal remains, horse bones would have been easily distinguishable from human bones in a pyre, so their collection and inclusion in the same urn as the deceased human was not happenstance. This horse was cremated with or possibly around the same time as the deceased individual, and horse and human were interred together with their respective personal ornaments.

Living horses seem to have had a strong association with males, clearly evident in the burials in Tumulus VI. It is possible that this tumulus was a place set apart for the burial of particular men and particular horses. It is clear that the community valued interment not just of horse bodies but also horse gear as well. This is notable because horse gear is an important physical mediator in human-horse interactions (Argent 2010; 2012; Brittain and Overton 2013, 139). In Tumulus VI half the horse burials included horse gear, while a spur was also found in Tumulus XIII, Grave 49. Horse gear worked in concert with the discrete bodies involved in horse riding and facilitated the communication and concerted action that allowed two bodies to move and act as one (Game 2001; Argent 2012; Brittain and Overton 2013, 139). This human–horse cooperation engendered a different relationship from those shared with other domesticates:

Unlike other ‘agricultural’ animals raised as part of food and commodity economies, equines provide humans with the opportunity to build partnerships which perform embodied acts in space. The walking, trotting, cantering, jumping and racing in these activities require a working partnership between humans and non-humans which, due to the size of the animal and the nature of the acts undertaken, cannot be solely coercive. Rather, both parties, different as they may be, act as one to produce acts neither would undertake on their own (Evans and Franklin 2010, 173).

However, this may not have been an experience available to many members of the community, since horses were probably only available to elites (Dular 2007; Kmet’ová 2013). The lived engagements of particular horses and particular individuals, as well as the communal experiences of horses and their roles at this site, facilitated the assembly of these horses at Tumulus VI. The initial notable co-burials of horses and humans may have led to similar practices of assembling that ultimately led to Tumulus VI standing as a potent monument to human-horse relationships. The materialization of these particular human–animal relationships in funerary ritual also had implications for human–human relationships. Equestrianism would also have been an embodiment of social distinction, with only certain individuals enjoying regular access to a distinct practice and human–animal relationship. References to equestrianism in mortuary contexts cemented human–human distinctions between those with and those without access to human-horse relations.

In contrast, representations of horses are less frequent than actual horses at Brezje. The sole representations of horses come from a matched pair of fibulae in Tumulus VII Grave 1. It is unclear whether the horse representations were included because of the importance of horses or because of some other aspect of the artifacts themselves or the deceased individual.

In situla art only males are portrayed as horse riders, and it may be that this closer personal relationship between man and horse led to the more frequent sacrifice and burial of a horse as part of local funerary ritual (Dular 2007, 746). It also may be that the interment of horse and man together does not indicate a close personal relationship, especially since often older or lame horses were chosen for burial (Bökönyi 1968, 11–15; Tecco Hvala 2012, 29). The burials of horses may have symbolically expressed the status or role of certain men, or the perceived significance of horses. Horses figure prominently in depictions of cult wagons, and scholars have proposed that people believed wagons and particularly horses played a

role in transporting the deceased to the afterlife (Pare 1989, 96–7). Animals were familiar with known pasts, just like the deceased individuals and grave goods assembled in mortuary ritual. Their assembling in the performance of funerary ritual at Brezje pri Trebelnem may speak to an imagined future where these animals and representations of animals played a role with the deceased. Perhaps horses served as companions in death, or horse gear may have been necessary for the afterlives of certain men for whom the importance of horse riding continued in death. In this way the trajectories of certain horses and individuals were assembled in these rituals. These funerary activities were rich and evocative performances, not simply laying people to rest, but marshaling other creatures as well as potent materials appropriate to commemorate, mourn, and ease the social transition from life to death.

Representations of birds by contrast appear to have been significant for both men and women. Rather than identifying any particular social group, their role may have been as observers, always present but rarely engaging with humans. In situla art birds appear in nearly every scene and yet are rarely involved in the main action (Allinger 2007, 8), and they may have been considered analogous to guides or guardians. Birds were ubiquitous in daily experience, yet many bird species shy away from humans. Familiar but aloof, they may have seemed appropriate to assemble in depictions rather than physically for funerary ritual as no bird remains were recovered from any graves. In Tumulus VII there were three avian fibulae: a matched set in Grave 12, as well as a single one in Grave 35. Tumulus XII Grave 37 contained the helmet with two avian–human hybrid figures, while Tumulus XIII Grave 6 contained a bronze pendant with suspended avian figures. The hybrid figures on the helmet, possibly sphinxes, introduce a Mediterranean element. Since hybrid figures and mythical creatures were much less common in the local artistic repertoire, the Dolenjska Hallstatt peoples likely would have seen the sphinxes as foreign (Turk 2005, 24; Križ *et al.* 2009, 133). At the same time, the hybrid figures that do appear in Dolenjska representations most often possess avian attributes, usually wings, and there may have been something about birds that made them appropriate for creating blended species.

The subsistence animals that people likely interacted with daily are depicted only rarely in the Early Iron Age (Bakarić *et al.* 2006, 89). Cattle (*Bos taurus*) consistently make up at least half the zooarchaeological remains at settlements (Bartosiewicz 1996, 30, 32).⁷ The age profiles demonstrate that cattle were used for meat as well as traction, leather, and milk (Dular and Tecco Hvala 2007, 211–2). Pigs (*Sus domesticus*) were generally the second most common domesticate. Sheep (*Ovis aries*) and goats (*Capra hircus*) were also utilized for meat, milk, and wool (Bökönyi 1994, 196; Dular and Tecco Hvala 2007, 211–2; Križ *et al.* 2009, 95). Significant interactions were involved in daily care for these animals, as well as in the butchery, consumption, and use of primary and secondary animal products. These interactions entailed the human community's personal familiarity with these animals, yet they rarely appear in the imagery at Brezje, and their bodies are not included in any burials. The bronze ram's head from Tumulus VII Grave 1 and the ceramic bull's head from Tumulus XIII Grave 30 constitute the only depictions of subsistence animals. Daily practice, places in the landscape, material culture, and bodily interactions would have linked humans with their domesticates – yet this daily interaction was apparently unnecessary to assemble in mortuary practices.

By contrast, people infrequently encountered red deer at Brezje. Remains of wild animals consistently make up less than 5% of the zooarchaeological material in settlements (Bökönyi

1974, 85; Bartosiewicz 1991, 199, 203; Dular and Tecco Hvala 2007, 212). The most likely explanations are either that hunting was restricted to elites (Sievers 1982, 61; Krausse 1990; Green 1992, 52; Rieckhoff 2001, 83; Turk 2005, 31–3; Arnold 2010; Rebay-Salisbury 2012, 99; for contrary opinions see Hansen 2013 and Trebsche 2013), or the significant deforestation that had occurred by this time had pushed wild animals far from habitation sites (Green 1992, 44, 52, 55; Arnold 2010, 200). Despite the low frequency in the zooarchaeological record of actual wild animals, they feature prominently in Early Iron Age iconography, especially in *situla* art. Tumulus XIII Grave 8 contained the only example of *situla* art at Brezje – the repaired belt plate clearly portraying a red deer stag, as well as other ungulates, a carnivore, and a bird. The stag is most visible, since the repairs obscure the other animals almost beyond recognition. Deer may have been particularly useful for the construction and representation of gendered narratives because sex is strongly marked in deer iconography as in the conspicuous antler racks of dominant males. Indeed although representations of genitalia are infrequent in Hallstatt animal art, representations of deer are the most obviously and frequently sexed subjects making them particularly appropriate for narratives representing the power of elite males who comprised a select few in the region, analogous to the dominant bucks visually set apart by their massive antler racks. Hunting has been implicated in the construction of male elite identity in other areas of Hallstatt Europe and may have served that purpose in the Dolenjska culture as well (Sievers 1982, 61; Krausse 1990; Green 1992, 52; Rieckhoff 2001, 83; Turk 2005, 31–3; Arnold 2010; Rebay-Salisbury 2012, 99). Markers of elite male status – an additional belt plate, axe, and spearheads – accompanied the belt plate. The repairs maintaining the integrity of the red deer stag may have been intended to foreground the figure deemed most symbolically significant for the particular elite male in Grave 8. The practices of assembling undertaken in this funerary ritual brought together long-standing markers of elite male status, modes of representation, and ideologies about red deer stags, as well as the largely abstract experience of these animals if interactions were as limited as described above. This funerary assemblage did not align with other practices known from this site but instead referenced broader regional ideologies, serving to cement the associations between elite males and red deer stags through repetition, facilitating the continuing salience of these symbolic associations.

The community's daily experience of domesticated animals engendered familiarity with certain animals as well as with these species in general. These were quotidian, consistent interactions through care, management, work, and consumption. Yet mortuary activity assembled only the horses, sheep, and cattle, and sheep and cattle each is represented only on a single artifact. These species were ubiquitous and essential to daily life, yet they were apparently not appropriate to represent or cite in community mortuary practices. Horses by contrast were symbolically potent, and horse bodies were assembled in certain mortuary rituals that in many cases also involved the assembling of martial artifacts and male individuals. It may be that despite similar requirements of care, the particular roles of horses within the community, their more limited presence, ownership restrictions, as well as the particular rider–horse relationship made them appropriate to assemble in the funerary rituals of certain individuals.

These human–animal relationships were characterized by distinct temporalities because of the regularity, duration, and intensity of human–animal engagements. Interactions with

domesticates occurred daily. Interactions with horses, if less frequent for the majority of the community, involved more intense contact for riders. Experience of birds would have also been relatively constant, though less intense, and likely based more on observation than direct interaction. The more limited physical engagement with birds may have made them appropriate to use as the other in hybrid human–animal depictions. People encountered other wild animals, particularly red deer, less frequently but more intensely as prey in the hunt or as glimpses on the landscape.

The temporalities of these quotidian relationships were cited and yet manipulated by Dolenjska Hallstatt peoples in the practices of assembling in funerary ritual. Certain human–animal relationships were materialized through representation – these durable materializations were both a more lasting and a more curated expression of lived interactions. Particular representations highlighted and/or underplayed certain aspect of these animals (sex, individuality, age, behaviors, etc.), and through representation assembled on particular artifacts referenced shared knowledge of these animals. For example, the belt plate assembled regional ideologies of eliteness, male associations of red deer stags, experience of red deer and other non-domestic animals, as well as modes of personal adornment and ideas about appropriately outfitting the deceased. The anonymity of the depictions of generalized animals¹ included in burials contrasts with the interment of actual deceased horses with known life histories. The use of these representations of animals and animal bodies was not epiphenomenal, or so ritualized as to be entirely esoteric – mortuary practices involving animals were meaningful for their purposeful citation of past experiences of human–animal interactions and ideologies. Past experiences were drawn upon in the construction of a meaning-laden present funerary ritual that also encompassed hopes for the ideal(ized) future of the deceased and the community as a whole.

Assembling was a multi-temporal project – constantly in action through daily engagements with animals, always incomplete and in flux. Yet these fluid and in-motion assemblages that encompassed animal bodies, materials, relationships, and ideologies were cited and briefly crystalized in the particular funerary ritual *assembled* by mourners to commemorate a particular individual. These in-the-present activities referenced past human–animal interactions, highlighting some at the expense of others, to foreground particular symbolic associations and convey curated social meanings. Men and their horses, birds as other, stags as analogies to the elite male – these associations grew out of past experiences but through their in-the-present use in funerary ritual were strengthened, modified, and/or reconfigured. These pasts and presents also had implications for the future. There may have been intentional uses of past and present to position certain individuals or resources: horses as powerful, individual animals that reflected well on the status of their human partners; powerful stags dominating the wilderness, naturalizing the physical and social dominance exerted by the elite males that were their analogues. But these were only ever incomplete assemblages, since every new addition, every modification, every contingency and reformulation modified the assemblage itself and every act of assembling modified the conditions of possibility for the future.

Conclusion

The collection of the appropriate grave goods, outfitting of the individual, and performing appropriate funerary ritual were acts of assembling that brought together certain physical elements including individuals, animals, and materials, as well as abstract elements such as experiences of and ideas about animals, as well as hopes and expectations about the past, present, and future of human–human and human–animal relationships. These acts of assembling intervened and creatively drew on pre-existing assemblages to appropriately configure the particular assemblage of each funerary ritual, and in doing so modified these assemblages by adding to and reinforcing particular relationships and ideologies at the expense of others. To discuss “animals” as a catch all concept is clearly problematic, since there is more variation than similarity in the treatment and mode of inclusion of the various animal species and animal representations at Brezje. Daily life provided a rich body of lived experience of particular human–animal relationships. The citation of some of these relationships, as well as the elision of others, strengthened particular ideologies and modified the terrain of human–animal and human–human relations as a whole from that point on, creating new reference points for future interactions and ideologies.

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Notes

- 1 It should be noted that all gender attributions from this site are based on grave goods, since osteological remains do not preserve well in this area due to highly acidic soils, and any skeletal remains recovered in this period were not analyzed. All gender attributions made in this chapter are based on the associated grave goods and are only probable gender attributions since they could not be assessed with reference to biological sex.
- 2 Tumulus XII is labeled Tumulus I in Kromer’s 1959 presentation of these finds. The tumulus was originally labeled Tumulus I by Pečnik, however when the topographic map of the site was created the tumulus was renumbered XII, and was referred to as tumulus XII from that point on in Pečnik’s notes. Despite this, the finds were inventoried under the designation “Tumulus I” at the Naturhistorisches Museum in Vienna, which led to Kromer’s subsequent identification of this tumulus in the same way. Janez Dular and Borut Križ’s analysis of the original sources clarified this issue, and this tumulus is referred to as Tumulus XII here to remain consistent with their work as well as with the final notes and maps generated by Pečnik.
- 3 It has been suggested that these beads actually originate from Grave 34 and may have been added to the inventory of this grave at a later point (Dular and Križ 1990, 541).
- 4 Possibly a bird or a horse, though the representation is so schematic that it is impossible to determine.

- 5 Based on the paw, since that is the most distinctive visible part of the animal.
- 6 The figures on these fibulae are usually identified as horse heads, but they are so schematic that it is impossible to make a secure designation.
- 7 This is a regional pattern – Karlin, the hillfort site associated with Brezje pri Trebelnem, has not been intensively investigated and patterns of subsistence are not known from this site.

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The tale of a mud brick: lessons from Tuzusai and de-assembling an Iron Age site on the Talgar alluvial fan in south-eastern Kazakhstan

Claudia Chang and Rebecca Beardmore

In Making Prehistory: Historical Science and the Scientific Realism Debate (2009), Derek Turner discusses why both the tiny and 'the past' are unobservable and thus defy the logic of scientific realism. This paper discusses difficulties in bridging the gap between the tiny particulars derived from archaeological assemblages and an interpretive framework for explaining mud brick architecture at an Iron Age village site in Kazakhstan. The material nature of mud brick also provides the archaeologist with another window for the interpretation of Iron Age settlement patterns. The ongoing replenishment of the mud brick, always vulnerable to the elements, provides a window onto settlement patterns.

At the Iron Age site of Tuzusai (400 BCE–1 CE) there are standard assemblages of ceramics, animal bones, ancient plant materials, metals, and stone tools. Each assemblage is part of a larger archaeological context used to interpret the function of Iron Age settlements along the silk route. The assemblages themselves tell us little about modes of exchange, yet they are the building blocks from which a narrative of silk road interaction is constructed. This essay considers another assemblage, often overlooked but essential to Iron Age settlements, the mud brick architecture. In this paper we examine the phytolith contents, otherwise known as the 'tiny', of the two types of mud brick, in order to construct a good 'background theory' for identifying and interpreting mud brick architecture. Mud brick is constructed according to certain recipes, partially observable through the study of phytoliths (the truly microscopic). The recognition of mud brick as a super-artifact and part of the total set of assemblages at Tuzusai thus allows us to consider how mud brick shaped the social lives of the Iron Age inhabitants of an alluvial fan. During the medieval period fired mud brick was used to create huge city walls, temples, palaces, dwellings, kilns, baths, and other monumental architecture. At Tuzusai,

an Iron Age village or series of hamlets, unfired mud brick was used to construct walls, platforms, semi-subterranean pit houses, house floors, and other features. In what ways does the interpretation of the mud brick assemblage at Tuzusai help to define the level of mobility or sedentism at Iron Age villages?

KEYWORDS: MUD BRICK, AGRO-PASTORALISM, PHYTOLITHS

Mud brick architecture found at Iron Age sites of the 1st millennium BCE in the temperate continental climate of south-eastern Kazakhstan can be challenging for the field archaeologist. There are at least two reasons for this: (1) the historically-held belief that the nomadic groups of the Saka (variants of the Eastern Scythians) and Wusun who occupied this area of southeastern Kazakhstan did not build durable mud brick architectural structures; and (2) mud brick as an assemblage is subject to collapse, wall fall, irregularity, and non-conformities. In fact, when we began our excavations at the Iron Age site of Tuzusai in the mid-1990s we tended to overlook the archaeological evidence of mud brick in favor of pits or semi-subterranean pit house constructions. In light of the presence of other assemblages at Tuzusai such as animal bone remains, ceramic sherds, and metal or bone artifacts, mud brick is seldom afforded much consideration. This essay seeks to explore the material nature of the mud brick assemblage at Tuzusai through the examination of phytoliths in four different samples of mud bricks. It also attempts to build a larger social context for examining mud brick as a material object or artifact that is ubiquitous, not invisible.

The site, its location, and environmental setting

The Kazakh-American Archaeological Expedition (KAAE) excavated the Iron Age settlement of Tuzusai in 1994–1996 and again from 2008 to 2014. The site dates from about 400 BCE–1 CE and is located on the Talgar alluvial fan at the base of the Zailiisky Alatau mountains, a section of the Northern Tian Shan range. This large site of about 4–10 ha has a series of scattered pit house and walled rectangular constructions, associated fire places, storage pits, and ditches located on the west bank of an old stream bed. The re-worked loess has been used for the formation of mud brick architecture such as walls and house foundations. At some semi-subterranean pit houses, mud brick ramps or walls reinforce the earthen walls of the house. Tuzusai is significant in part because archaeologists have found evidence for a dual economy of cereal agriculture of wheat, barley, and foxtail and broomcorn millets as well as the herding of sheep and goats, cattle and horses (Spengler *et al.* 2013). The chronology at the site indicates an occupation at the last period of the Saka nomadic confederacy and the earliest period of the Wusun statelet.

The ‘tiny’ and the ‘past’

As a theoretical framework we have also chosen to discuss ‘realist science’ as aspects of it apply to a discussion of both the ‘tiny’ and the ‘past.’ We use as a main reference Derek

Turner's (2007) book *Making Prehistory: Historical Science and the Scientific Realism Debate*. In North American philosophy of science, scientific realism developed as a counter to earlier logical positivism (Rouse 1998, 72; Psillos 2000). The growth of scientific realism allowed many different scientific fields to put forth their own approaches to the epistemology and methodology of doing their brand of science rather than relying only on models of science based upon physics. Turner's (2007) book is an attempt to place 'natural historical sciences' in a framework that can account for how scientific knowledge can be used to explain phenomena in 'the past,' a forgotten country that lacks an experimental context (it already has happened). We use scientific realism here not as a foil for the larger debate in the philosophy of science, but as a way of addressing Turner's claim that the 'past' like the 'tiny' or minuscule cannot be observed in its original context. Objects or events in the 'prehistoric past' cannot be manipulated in an experimental context although they are readily 'explained' or even 'predicted.' The 'past' like the 'tiny' (neutrons, electrons, quarks) is unobservable. Yet the tiny or microscopic can be subject to manipulation and thus experimentation. What we know about the past must be inferred or interpreted from the archaeological record. The background theories used to study either the 'tiny' or the 'past' may create or enlarge evidence and thus the scope of research, or dampen and narrow evidence (*ibid.*). In our discussions of the materiality of mud brick constructions at an Iron Age site, the analysis of phytolith samples taken from two different types of mud brick provides greater insight into the importance of Iron Age house and wall constructions at the sedentary villages and hamlets of these Eurasian nomadic confederacies. Here the 'tiny' might appear to be a metaphor for the 'past': present but sometimes not completely known because of the difficulty of experimentation, manipulation, or replication. The use of phytolith analysis of plant contents in mud brick samples stands for the 'tiny.' The Iron Age 'past' can be recovered through the careful recognition of mud brick as a set of objects that have form, function, and meaning. At our earlier excavations, our interpretations of village life were often narrowed or dampened by an inability to recognize mud brick as an assemblage. This essay on the materiality of mud brick at Iron Age settlements in southeastern Kazakhstan is intended to be a 'work in progress' – that is we provide a narrative for the process of investigating mud brick in the field and in the laboratory. Also we put forth some future directions for further research on the materiality of mud brick architecture at Tuzusai and other Iron Age sites in this region of Kazakhstan. Our interest in the materiality of mud brick refers to: (1) the craft of making, forming, and building with mud brick; and (2) the social significance of mud brick architecture at the site such as platforms, rectangular versus curvilinear wall construction, and the creation of household versus communal spaces.

Mud brick as an assemblage

Field archaeologists build their framework for explaining or interpreting past human practices through the direct observation of materials discovered at a site, such as mud brick, ceramic sherds, or animal bones. Each object-type or category must at some later time be re-assembled to create a larger framework for interpreting the material remains at an archaeological site. During our excavations at Tuzusai in the mid-1990s we often failed to recognize mud brick constructions and sometimes destroyed fragments of mud brick architecture. There were at

least two reasons for this: (1) we had no template for recognizing mud brick architecture during this time period (the Iron Age); and (2) mud bricks in a temperate climate melted into the soil matrix and therefore were often indistinguishable from the overall sediment matrix at the site. In subsequent periods of excavation, we began to identify the conformation and appearance of mud brick rubble, wall fall or collapse. An object, previously overlooked, now entered into our archaeological awareness as a ‘super-artifact’ that shaped the social and economic lives of the Iron Age inhabitants of Tuzusai.

Crafting mud brick: the materiality of a built environment

Let us return to our discussion of how mud brick is crafted. In studies of contemporary mud brick architecture researchers have shown that the mud brick can be shaped by hand or by frame (Van Beck and Van Beck 2008, 141). In the Talgar area we have observed that contemporary mud brick housing is made as either: (1) rammed earth construction; or (2) built up from individually formed mud bricks. Usually workmen or male family members are responsible for making mud bricks or rammed earth constructions. The wet mud is mixed in pits with water, earth, straw, and other binding materials. Individual bricks are sun dried before the next stages of construction take place. In rammed earth construction, wet mud is poured into a wooden frame and then packed to form a wall. When the initial wall section is dried, the next layer of mud is poured into the wooden framework and then packed. Since the dominant soil matrix on the Talgar alluvial fan consists of loess soils with a high content of silt, and little to no clay, the forming of mud brick, adobe, or rammed earth construction requires high quantities of binding material such as plant chaff, straw, and dung. Another technique of mud brick architecture, present at the Iron Age site of Tuzusai, but not observed in contemporary architecture, is the use of irregularly shaped mud balls to form walls or platforms. Even today the building craft of mud constructions on the Talgar fan requires considerable expertise and know-how. The Iron Age builders of mud brick walls, houses, and platforms were craftsmen in their own right, whether household members or trained specialists. In the Iron Age society of Talgar during the Saka and Wusun periods, there was a division between the aristocratic nomadic elite, often buried in earthen or stone kurgans found throughout the Talgar fan, and the commoners who provided agricultural and pastoral products throughout the region. The mud brick builders, most likely drawn from the ranks of the common folk, were also important to the overall social hierarchy extant during the Iron Age. Their expertise and labor not only contributed to the permanent architecture at the Iron Age settlements of the Talgar region, but also shaped economic and social spaces at hamlets and villages such as Tuzusai.

Phytolith analysis from two types of mud brick at Tuzusai in 2011

The mud brick fragments at the Iron Age site of Tuzusai are as follows: (1) lumps of mud brick that appear to be irregular or like ‘mud balls’; (2) hand-molded plano-convex mud

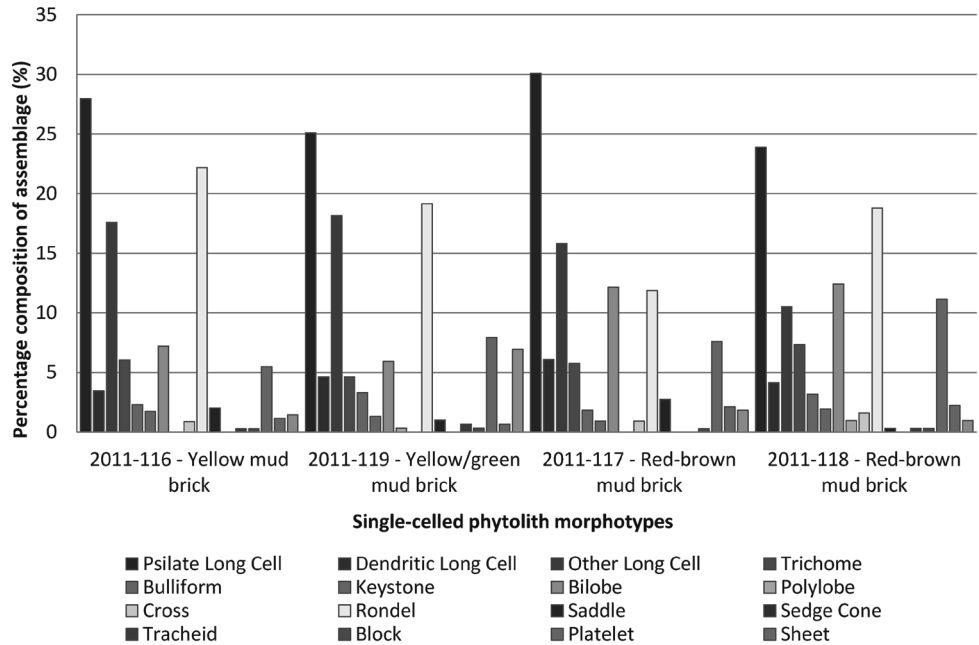


Fig. 6.1. Percentage composition of phytolith assemblage for single-celled morphotypes in mud brick samples

brick (elongated loaf shaped); and (3) large rectangular mud brick blocks (either hand-formed or mold-formed; Van Beck and Van Beck 2008, 143–58). In our preliminary studies of the phytolith content of two different samples of mud brick, we focused specifically on the last two types: (1) the yellow-colored, hand-molded plano-convex mud brick (elongated loaf shaped), usually 15 × 10 × 8 cm in size; and (2) the red-brown colored, large rectangular mud brick blocks (either hand-formed or mold-formed), usually 30 × 20 × 15 cm in size. During the 2011 excavations at Tuzusai we took phytolith samples from four different bricks, two of each type, as an exploratory exercise. These four samples were part of a much wider phytolith study investigating economic and social uses of plants across the site, which included samples from floors, ash deposits, hearths, and in layered stratigraphic profiles. These were processed using the standard phytolith extraction protocol at the University College London laboratory (Rosen 1999). The assumption underlying the analysis was that the phytoliths present in the mud bricks were derived from plant material added as temper to the mud to help bind it, and therefore any differences in plant matter might indicate differing types or quantities of temper.

The samples were analyzed for both the density of phytoliths within the sample (expressed as no. of phytoliths extracted per g of sediment) and also the percentage composition of the phytolith assemblage, observed through counts of single-celled morphotypes (Twiss *et al.* 1969). In addition to these quantitative values, multi-celled silica ‘skeletons,’ which can allow more precise identification to genus and occasionally species level (Piperno 2006, 23), were recorded as a qualitative presence/absence observation. Variation in the percentage

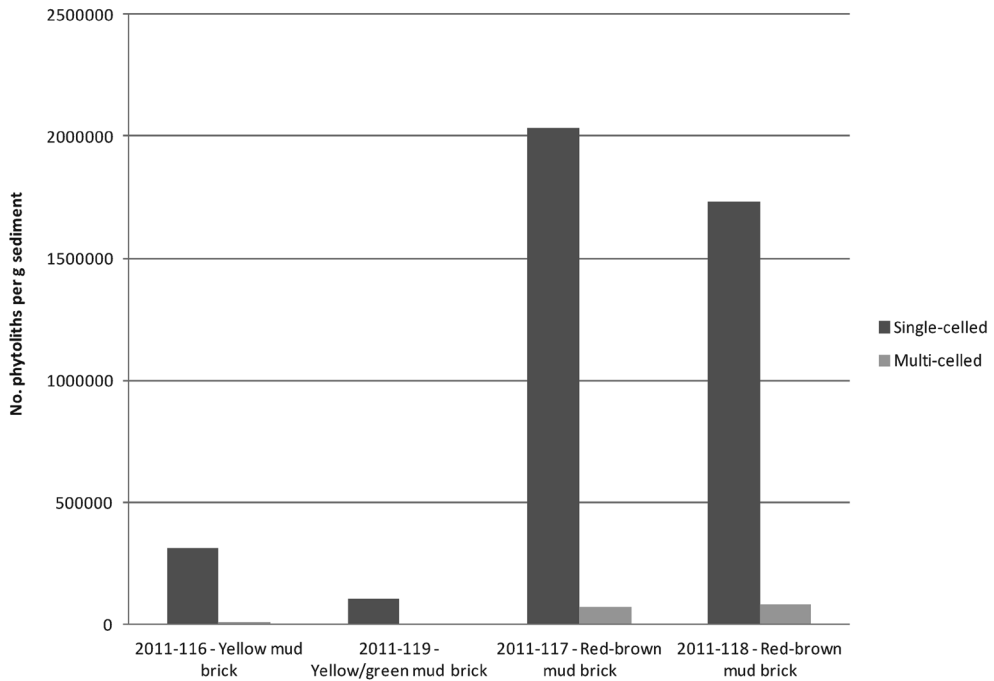


Fig. 6.2. Number of phytoliths per gram of sediment in mud brick samples

composition of total single-celled morphotype counts might indicate that different plant assemblages were used to bind the mud. This is not the case, however. Figure 6.1 shows the percentage composition of single-celled phytolith morphotypes, demonstrating that both types of brick had broadly similar compositions in terms of plant assemblages present. However, when we observe the density of phytoliths in each sample, it becomes apparent that the red-brown colored mud brick has far higher densities of phytolith material per gram of sediment compared to the yellow colored mud brick (Figure 6.2). If we make the reasonable assumption that all the sampled bricks have undergone the same post-depositional taphonomic processes on the site, given that they come from a small excavation area and narrow time period (*c.* 400 BCE–1 CE), the higher density of phytoliths in the red-brown colored bricks represents a higher concentration of plant matter present. Our observation, therefore, is that while it appears that a similar assemblage of plant matter was added to the two types of mud brick, the red-brown colored mud brick contained far greater quantities of this temper than the yellow colored mud brick.

At the site the larger red-brown mud bricks usually are associated with house foundations and therefore are more durable. The yellow bricks are associated with floor and internal wall constructions as well as the top layers of a mud brick platform, have a lower density of plant materials, and therefore are less durable. The craftsmen of mud brick used different temper recipes for mixing the mud, depending upon the functions of the mud bricks. Indeed the identification of phytolith densities within an entire range of mud brick forms ranging from irregular shapes such as mud balls or lumps, to these regularly formed mud bricks

could reveal more about the choices made by the mud brick craftsmen in forming the mud bricks. At the Pre-Dynastic site of Adaima in Upper Egypt, samples of pisé (rammed earth constructions) were examined for macro-botanical remains of plant materials using flotation methods (Newton 2004). This study was able to demonstrate the ubiquity of cereal remains used as plant temper in the formation of pisé buildings. In the mud brick from Tuzusai phytoliths from wheat and millet were identified indicating that crop processing waste was included as temper, but wild species were also utilized, demonstrated by the presence of *Phragmites australis*. Future studies on mud brick from Kazakhstan have the potential to further explore the relationship between the use of cultivated and wild plants as temper, both from micro- and macro-botanical remains. Understanding the technology of mud brick is the first step toward interpreting the social significance of mud bricks and their architectural context.

Other information gleaned from phytoliths at Tuzusai

The rich phytolith assemblage taken from a range of archaeological contexts at Tuzusai shows that a wide variety of plant material was brought to the site, used and discarded. Multi-celled phytoliths indicate the presence of wheat, broomcorn millet, foxtail millet, and barley, most likely domesticated cereals cultivated near Tuzusai and consumed by the inhabitants. The most prevalent cereal husks present are wheat and millet, also corresponding with carbonized seeds found at pit house and hearth contexts from the 2008–2010 excavations (Spengler *et al.* 2013). Also significant was the presence in an ashy burning context (Sample 2011–246, Context 53) of large, well-preserved phytoliths from *Phragmites australis* (reed). Reeds probably were used for floor matting or roofing materials, and their well-preserved condition in an ashy context may represent the destruction of a feature through fire. In addition to *Phragmites*, floor contexts contained phytoliths from *Cyperaceae* (sedges) also used for matting. By considering the phytolith assemblage in terms of construction material found from mud brick, roofing, or floor matting, a fuller picture of the built environment at Tuzusai can be posited.

Mud brick as an assemblage of super-artifacts

We label mud brick as a super-artifact because it forms the built environment within a hamlet or village settlement. Usually artifacts are single objects or fragments of objects. Mud bricks are objects comprised of sediment, plant matter, and other debris. The mud brick at Tuzusai was made and used to build structures by householders, specialists, workmen, or a community workforce. Our pilot study on a very small quantity of mud bricks allows us now to consider how the ‘tiny’ or, in this case, the microscopic, phytoliths can further define mud brick as an object. The phytolith assemblages in the two types of mud brick help to describe the different uses of the mud brick. The observation of ‘tiny’ silicates in mud brick may enlarge the range of field observations we can make in the future as to the size, shapes, form, crafting, and use of mud brick. Domestic buildings were the foci for

family or kin groupings. Mud brick architecture at Tuzusai defines exterior spaces such as yards and plazas and interior spaces such as rooms, pit houses, or store rooms. Some mud bricks were used to build cross-walls and floor foundations, while other mud bricks were used to build foundations. As an artifact, mud brick is understood at Tuzusai to have as much importance as the more traditionally object-based assemblages of stone, ceramic, bone, and metal artifacts. We would like to know more about the recipes used to make the mud brick and how these recipes contributed to its use across the site and its durability in the construction of architectural features. These initial observations have resulted in a more careful recording of different kinds of mud brick occurrences found in subsequent excavations at Tuzusai such as: (1) mud brick collapse as in wall fall; (2) discarded piles of deteriorated or useless mud brick; (3) rubble fill found in pits that provide support or foundations for upper floors or walls; (4) exterior yard walls defining compound areas; (5) buttressed side walls of semi-subterranean pit houses; (6) house walls; (7) interior dividing walls for rooms; (8) platforms; (9) wall foundations; (10) floors; and (11) ceiling or roof collapse. Additional phytolith analyses from such mud brick occurrences could yield data on the densities of plant materials, the durability of the bricks, balls, or lumps, and the plant species found in different varieties of mud brick.

Mud brick can and does represent an important assemblage in the object-based inventory of Tuzusai and other Iron Age settlements on the Talgar alluvial fan. There are perhaps several reasons why it originally did not qualify as an object worthy of close examination. An object may only become visible to the field archaeologist over the course of many years of fieldwork because of either poor excavation technique or inadequate observational skills (or both). Tuzusai is a particularly difficult site to excavate because the appearance of architectural features, with the exception of pits or hearths, are often hard to trace in loess soils, the parent matrix and also the substance used to make the mud brick itself. We also argue that there are other reasons why the mud brick assemblage went relatively unnoticed in the beginning years of excavation. At the Medieval sites of south Kazakhstan, mud brick comes as fired tiles usually made of standard size. In the desert-oases of Central Asia, Iron Age mud brick buildings are made of *pisé* (rammed earth) (Alison Betts, pers. comm.). The temperate continental climate of south eastern Kazakhstan is probably the upper limit to which mud brick architecture, either of plano-convex, loaf-shaped bricks or square or rectangular blocks can be effectively used as building materials. Thus mud brick contexts found at Tuzusai are often melted, smeared, collapsed, and difficult to identify. Studies in the Near East have employed micromorphology as a means of documenting the chemical and physical elements present in decaying, unfired mud brick, so as to determine taphonomic and post-depositional site formation processes (Friesem *et al.* 2011). By consciously labeling mud brick as a ubiquitous assemblage at Tuzusai, we now have removed the conceptual blinders that previously rendered mud brick invisible.

The social nature of mud brick

In materiality studies, the social significance of the object involves a larger interpretive context that goes beyond an object's composition or its process of production (Ingold 2007). We have already discussed the crafting or making of mud brick. The Iron Age builders of

mud brick constructions were fashioning useful objects that required a certain degree of expertise and skill. We have posited that the crafters of mud brick were drawn from the commoners in the social hierarchy of a nomadic confederacy. How did the construction of spaces such as residential areas, storage places, yards, and platforms shape the social environment of the Iron Age inhabitants of Tuzusai? The built environment of either round semi-subterranean pit houses with post construction or rectangular above-ground walled houses or rooms found at Tuzusai indicate a temporal change in the spatial lay-out of the village. At Tuzusai there are two phases dated by a series of radiometric dates. Phase 1 dates from 400 to 300 BCE and Phase 2 dates from BCE 100 to 1 CE (Panyushkina *et al.* 2012). There is a hiatus of over 200 years. Since the site was occupied across transitional periods between the Late Saka period (400–200 BCE) and the Early Wusun period (200 BCE–1 CE), it may be the case that the earlier architecture (Saka period) consists of round semi-subterranean pit houses, while the later architecture consists of rectangular or square mud brick rooms or buildings.

In other areas of the world, the change from round to square buildings during the early Neolithic has been documented at such sites as Jerf el Ahmar, Mureybat, and Cayonu (Simmons 2011, 98–9). The shift from ‘round’ to square or rectangular often accompanies an increase in early farming populations and their need to create agglomerated attached rooms and buildings rather than discrete circular or semi-circular buildings. From the standpoint of sociality, we might also conclude that round houses more comfortably accommodated communal family units, while square or rectangular buildings with a series of interior room divisions already imply spatially separate functions within the household. Perhaps specialized activities took place in rooms designated particularly for specific functions, and so remained hidden from guests or other family members. With respect to Tuzusai, the shift from round to rectangular buildings could signal a difference in the nature of sociality. Round houses associated with the earlier Saka period were the seats of communal solidarity within a household. Perhaps the round house constructions were more typical of ‘nomadic’ architecture, while the Wusun housing was more typical of agrarian housing of the Han period. During the later phase of the Wusun period, rectangular or square buildings were constructed in such a way as to express the ‘separateness’ of either household activities or personnel. In some cases, rectangular architecture allowed for the agglomeration of house compounds. At another Iron Age site, Taldy Bulak 2, 4 km to the south, the storage rooms were subterranean rectangular pits, while the pit houses were irregular-shaped or sub-rounded houses.

Mud bricks are used in both phases, although mud brick architecture in the Saka phase is associated with the sidewalls that reinforced circular pit houses or the rubble fill that supported more recent floor levels. During the Wusun period architecture is more typical of the construction of exterior and interior walls, rectangular house foundations, internal wall partitions, and curvilinear upper platforms. What is apparent from our field observations is that some mud bricks are well-formed, such as the yellow-colored and red-brown ones, while others are crudely formed lumps or balls. In the last three years of excavations (2012, 2013, and 2014), we have identified a range of structures from: (1) a curvilinear upper mud brick platform with ash deposits; (2) lower semi-subterranean rooms with both mud brick walls and natural earth side walls; (3) double-walled rectangular structures; (4) circular pit houses with upper mud brick wall contexts; and (5) exterior mud brick walls separating house

compounds. The variety and range of structures using mud brick, rammed earth, or mud balls or lumps suggest the relative ‘plasticity’ and overall creativity of those fashioning mud brick buildings. In other words, there seems to be little ‘long-range planning’ or uniformity in either the shape of buildings or the design of architecture. The tremendous variety and diversity in architectural forms is matched by the great range and diversity in the shapes of ceramic vessels found at Tuzusai (MaryFran Heinsch, pers. comm. 2014) and suggests at least two possibilities: (1) local mud brick craftsmen employed a range of vernacular house styles that were often idiosyncratic and variable; and/or (2) the influx of outside influences from either pastoral or agrarian societies led to eclectic architectural styles.

The social meaning and practices associated with mud brick architecture at Tuzusai

In this section we offer some further directions for the investigation of mud brick assemblages and architecture at Tuzusai and other Iron Age sites. Mud brick and pit house architecture at Tuzusai does not conform to the uniform design of buildings such as the temples, baths, palaces, residential houses, workshops and storerooms found at the medieval sites (8th–15th century CE) of south Kazakhstan and Semirech’ye. The eclectic, vernacular, and even idiosyncratic nature of architectural features seems to suggest that mud brick craft was experimental, local, and highly variable. If indeed later rectangular and square room construction was borrowed from agrarian groups to the east during the Wusun period, the local practitioners appear to have been more likely to transform an ‘outside’ tradition to their own sense of functionality and aesthetics. In the earlier Saka phase of Tuzusai occupation, the round or sub-rounded houses also seem variable, sometimes following a honey-comb pattern (three or four round pit houses, 3–4 m in diameter) attached to a central rectangular building lined with post molds on all four sides (2008, 2009, and 2010 excavations). Are such constructions, as they appear to be, dense with social meaning and also the loci for important social practices? In the honeycomb pattern of pit houses attached to a central rectangular house with layers of plastered floors, separate households found in each round house were tied to a central meetinghouse. In an ethnoarchaeological study of rural housing in Rajasthan, Boivin (2000) discusses how house floors in rural houses are repeatedly plastered after each *samskar* (ritual marking changes in age status for members of the household). Did the central meeting house at Tuzusai represent a place where three or four families met occasionally for ritual events that required the re-plastering of the meetinghouse floor?

Thus we posit a series of questions about the mud brick assemblage and architectural features at Tuzusai. In posing these questions our desire is to reach some deeper understanding of how mud brick craft and practice might embed both social meaning and practice in a society that is ‘nomadic’ in orientation but agro-pastoral in economy.

- 1 Is there a temporal difference between mud brick assemblages found in Phase 1 and in Phase 2? Since there seems to be a divide between the round houses of Phase 1 and the rectangular or curvilinear houses of Phase 2 at Tuzusai, there may also be temporal differences in the mud brick assemblages. This will require tracing out whether different types of mud brick were formed in different time periods. A caveat is in order for the

two mud brick types we examined because both come from Phase 2, or the Wusun period occupation. However it may be the case that earlier mud brick associated with pit houses represents a different assemblage. That could be apparent both in forming properties as well as phytolith content.

- 2 In what way does the spatial lay-out of mud brick walls, both interior and exterior bound social groups? Is it possible through careful analyses of a total context (other artifact objects) to discern elite residential areas from commoner areas?
- 3 Shared communal spaces such as the central meeting house with the surrounding pit houses found in the Saka phase or the upper platform found in the Wusun phase with a series of smashed whole vessels could suggest places of communal or at least group performances. The central meetinghouse may have operated as a 'plaza' area where communal rituals or feasting among a kin group of several households took place. The upper platform above two lower semi-subterranean rectangular rooms found during the Wusun phase may have been a shared social space where two elite households shared an upper veranda. This place was also located at the highest elevation at the site and could have been a place for public display of ritual conducted by elites for the commoners.
- 4 Tuzusai is the largest site of the three settlements excavated by the KAAE since the mid-1990s. It is also the site with the greatest quantity of mud brick architecture. Was mud brick architecture a sign of relative status and importance within the context of Iron Age settlements of the Talgar region?

Mobility, sedentism, and the built environment of the Talgar fan

Throughout the 550 sq km area of the Talgar alluvial fan, Iron Age burial mounds have been located along old streambeds. Linear clusters of burial mounds have come to dominate the archaeological work conducted in this region. The archaeological studies of Iron Age settlements in this region have only begun to uncover the mud brick and earthen architecture of pit house constructions and rectangular houses and compounds. The communal labor used to construct both the burial monuments and the settlements was considerable, most likely relying upon commoners who served an aristocratic nomadic elite (Chang 2012). In our model of social organization the nomadic elite could have been mobile, while the commoners for the most part were sedentary or semi-sedentary folk, engaged in the herding of sheep, goats, cattle, and horses and the cultivation of wheat, barley, and the two millets. This agropastoral economy also expressed itself in the types of architecture and built environment created in the hamlets and villages of Iron Age Talgar. The 'mobility' of the elites allowed the members of the Saka confederacy or the Wusun statelet to join with other elites across broad regional expanses when necessary. In this sense, mobility was more social, political, or military in nature than economic. A confederacy or state relied upon the local elite to provide tribute, labor, or military forces for the larger hierarchical structure.

The discovery of mud brick architecture at Tuzusai and other Iron Age sites confirms two ideas extant in this narrative of social hierarchy: (1) the crafting of mud brick architecture, like the construction of burial mounds, was undertaken by a labor force of commoners; and (2) the construction of mud brick architecture, while probably influenced by the types of mud brick architecture from agrarian China or the Central Asian Iron Age communities,

appeared to be local and have its own vernacular style. The construction of the earthen and stone burial kurgans found on the Talgar fan is uniform, and follows the style and aesthetic of Iron Age burial kurgans throughout Semirech'ye. The mud brick features at Tuzusai, dispersed throughout a large area, were eclectic and highly variable, often irregular and roughly executed in comparison with the uniform appearance of later medieval period mud brick architecture in this region. The clear divide between the uniform and standardized construction of elite burial mounds on the Talgar fan and the settlement architecture at Tuzusai strongly indicates: (1) the clear divide between ritual mortuary architecture and everyday household structures; and (2) a possible juncture between the localized village architecture and pan-regional mortuary cults. Why is this so? Usually the status relations seen in mortuary cults are mirrored in household contexts. Why does the construction of burial mounds rely solely upon layers of earth and rock, a time-honored nomadic tradition, while the construction of settlements relies mainly upon pit house or mud brick structures, usually associated with settled, not mobile peoples? Were the residents of Tuzusai, rich or poor, sedentarized or mobile? Most indications suggest that they had a dual economy based on transhumant pastoralism and sedentary agrarian pursuits, but were mostly sedentary.

The careful consideration of a mud brick assemblage at an Iron Age settlement, both in terms of its tiny components (density of phytoliths) and its more obvious architectural presence, also points to important social dynamics between commoners and elites, and everyday and ritual practices. That is to say, the assemblage itself represents a set of objects that are no less valuable for interpretation than the usual artifact components of stone, ceramic, bone, or plant materials. The making of mud bricks required skill and knowledge. The actual construction of foundations, walls, floors, roofs, etc. also demanded labor power and foresight. Yet it is apparent that organized spatial planning only took place in a 'loose' sense, not in the uniform way it took place for 'planned communities.' The organization of communal labor necessary to build the Iron Age burial mounds was most likely not available when people were building local settlements. Household construction was probably informal, consisting of local groups or community members. The mud brick assemblage must be recognized at Iron Age Tuzusai if we are to more fully interpret the juxtaposition between the commoners and elites on the Talgar fan. In earlier excavations, the mud brick assemblage was overlooked and unrecognized, and therefore we concluded that features at Tuzusai consisted solely of circular and sub-rectangular storage pits and fire hearths. The use of phytolith analyses to investigate the density of plant materials and their durability in mud brick, proved that mud brick as an object was indeed an essential assemblage, needed to construct social contexts and spatial arrangements among the commoner and elite members of the Talgar fan. The social motivations for constructing a shared platform or meetinghouse ensured communal space that might even have served to mask inequality among households. Shared communal areas such as raised platforms or a central meetinghouse created larger arenas for communal activities such as rituals, cooking, and feasting. The re-plastering of the communal meetinghouse and the careful curvilinear construction of the loaf-shaped yellow bricks of the raised platform represented the care and aesthetic style used by village craftsmen in the building of these shared spaces. The eclectic nature of settlement architecture at Tuzusai provides a good contrast to the uniform and predictable construction of the burial kurgans. Both mortuary monuments and everyday housing were constructed of earth or mud. The use of earth in the construction of dwellings and mortuary monuments also had

important social and ideological meaning, tying the Saka and Wusun societies to a natural landscape. In this sense the materiality of mud brick and pit house construction also had embedded ideological meanings directly connected to pastoral or agrarian landscapes. The ‘tiny’ specimens of phytoliths in a mud brick have the potential to tell us about the nature of a mud brick. An object such as a mud brick, when considered part of the larger assemblage of the built environment, has the potential to describe the boundaries of both intimate and shared social space within a village or a hamlet. In this manner both the ‘tiny’ and the ‘past’ provide richer interpretative frames within the context of Iron Age archaeology at the fringes of the Eurasian steppe.

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7.

Assembling the ironsmith

Kevin Garstki

As iron technology arose alongside and in many contexts replaced bronze production, the conception of what it meant to be a smith was rooted in the performance and social action involved in the production of iron objects. The development of iron technology in Ireland was a slow process, where meaning was enacted through the practices of the smith who may have travelled across the landscape from community to community. What it meant to be a smith necessitated both periodic innovation and the maintenance of expectations of competency, as systems of practice implicated in the technology were assessed by the consumers' perception. During the production of iron objects, the smith enacted performative traditions and imagined futures. The performances, saturated with symbolic associations, provided an occasion for multi-temporal meaning-making. The assembling of smith identity was produced concomitantly by the imaginations of his audience, the expectations of those consuming the products, and the choices of the smith himself. This chapter will provide a brief discussion of how we may conceive of the making of identity through a constant assembling of social engagements with performance, mobility, and temporality, specifically as it would have occurred for the itinerant smith, and present a possible case for the assembling of this identity in Iron Age Ireland.

KEYWORDS: IRELAND, IRON AGE, IRONSMITH, PERFORMANCE

Meaning is in the making. It is not a static declaration made only after events have unfolded, but rather is always in progress, subject to variables of relationality, temporality, experience and perception. It is useful to think through meaning in terms of an assemblage since multiple components are combined and brought together during meaning-making processes. The historicity of the term 'assemblage' in archaeology has tied it to the recovered material, ascribing meaning to groups of objects through what Wise (2011, 91) describes as "the process of arranging, organizing, fitting together." Deleuze and Guattari (1987) use the French term *agencement*, which highlights the in-progress activities of assemblages – the assembling. It is this continuing process of bringing-together, or *assembling*, that I wish to interrogate here. Meaning emerges from the assembling of not just materials but social

experience as well. Thus we can speak about not only the physical remains of the past as part of an assemblage, entangled in the process of assembling, but also social identity. Just as the material assemblage is created through the “collection of heterogenous elements” (Wise 2011, 92), so too the social conception of an individual comes together from multiple events of performative action and audience perception both during and after moments of performance. While an archaeological assemblage emerges from pieces of ceramic, faunal remains, iron slag, or stone tools, identity emerges through enactments of the self where different facets of social experience combine in an ongoing and ever-changing process. During assembling there is an in-progress ‘making and unmaking’ where *things* come together and move away from each other (Wise 2011, 93). Identity emerges from the multiple elements of human experience that make up this assemblage: perceived competence, innovation, contingency and choice, mobility, imagined futures, and remembered traditions. It is through this complex assembling of meaning and practice that I will explore the identity of the itinerant ironsmith, and discuss the different elements of human experience that we may consider when examining how social identity is (re)created and assembled. I argue that by thinking of iron production in terms of its performance, we can fruitfully engage with concepts such as tradition and innovation. The different facets that were in play in the assembling of smith identity were occurring at multiple moments in time and were repeatedly recreated. In this way, I suggest that identity, as a product of assembling experiences, is in constant motion and always incomplete. This chapter will provide a brief discussion of how we may conceive of the making of identity through a constant assembling of social engagements with performance, mobility, and temporality, specifically as it would have occurred for the itinerant smith, and present a possible case for the assembling of this identity in Iron Age Ireland.

The itinerant smith

The concept of an itinerant metalworker was initially (if not popularly) utilized by V. Gordon Childe in numerous works with specific reference to bronzesmiths (1929; 1930; 1969). For Childe, since the bronzesmith was extra-tribal and part of a distinct group of craftworkers, he was allowed to travel mostly unmolested through the landscape (1930, 10). This provided Childe (1929, 330) with an explanation for the diffusion of bronze technology, as well as other ‘culture’ packages, across Europe from the east.

It was, indeed, to ‘Hungarian’ influence that the Lausitz culture owed its specific form. But, if in this sense constitutive, the Hungarian influence is in fact external inasmuch as it can be explained by trade (trade comprising, of course, the activities of Hungarian tinkers or perambulating smiths).

Additionally, these roving artisans were a convenient explanation for the metal hoards found throughout the Continent and Britain (Childe 1969, 184). After Childe’s time, and as more was understood about how ideas and ‘cultures’ move through the landscape, the idea that itinerant smiths were the horses leading the diffusionist-cart of bronze technology was set aside. Rowland (1971, 214) noted that the limited evidence, ethnographic or otherwise, for this mode of production or for completely detribalized smiths meant that Childe’s concept could not be simply taken as dogma. Building on this critique, Gibson’s (1996) discussion

of Childe's use of the term and its applicability to Early Medieval Irish craftworkers also identified the issues with taking a concept and applying it wholesale to an archaeological context. Gibson (1996, 115) notes that the social structure he argues for during this period in Ireland would not have supported such mobility of individuals. In contrast to Childe's account of the itinerant metalworker, Budd and Taylor (1995) have suggested that bronzeworkers in the Old World were more likely to have been closely tied to an elite patron. However, ironworkers seemed to be differently placed in society. Budd and Taylor (1995, 140) suggest that the reorganization that society underwent in the period when iron was introduced actually provided a context for ironsmiths to be mobile:

Such "blacksmiths" may well have been itinerant, safely providing a range of liminal or magical services to sedentary communities who could keep them at arm's length (i.e. avoid ritual contagion), but actually in contrast to "bronzesmiths" of the preceding period.

This means that in contrast to a bronze metalworker, whose livelihood could have been tied directly to a patron, the ironsmith could have embodied a liminal quality that supported his itinerancy.

In fact, the potential mobility of metalsmiths in general is attested in various contexts. Though Rowlands (1971, 214) notes the minimal ethnographic evidence for itinerancy, he does identify Mongolian silversmiths as an example of metalworkers who move from community to community to practice their craft. More recently, Dietrich (2012, 214) looks to both archaeological and ethnographic contexts and identifies four different types of mobility in metalworkers: (1) full mobility of specialists distributing their services to communities without settled smiths; (2) seasonal mobility; (3) limited mobility over the life of the smith; and (4) travel to procure material. He notes that with the variety of modes of production and types of mobility demonstrated by numerous ethnographic contexts, it is somewhat naïve to assume that a single, stationary metal smith working in one community was ever the full picture (Dietrich 2012, 214). Additionally, Kusimba (1996) has presented an ethnographic context that specifically deals with ironsmiths and their ability to move across the landscape. He notes that, "smiths relocated to more prosperous places, as they have so often done since, to maintain their craft in the face of social, political, and economic changes" (Kusimba 1996, 402). This type of interaction illustrates the smiths' awareness of their economic surroundings, allowing them to avoid "saturation of the market" (Kusimba 1996, 402), specifically when they are dealing with a distributed population, as was the case for Ireland during the Iron Age. Mary Helms (1993) has discussed at length the unique positionality of artisans as a whole, but more specifically those involved in itinerancy. There are often other aspects of artisan identity beyond the pragmatic necessity of traveling to different communities, such as prestige, that are gained by movement across the landscape (Helms 1993, 33). So while the wholesale notion of an itinerant metal smith as conceived by Childe seems unlikely for prehistoric Europe, the possibility that craftworkers could have moved from community to community in order to expand their client base or because of the social implications for itinerancy can still be explored. We should be open to the possibilities for alternate constructions of artisan identity, exploring the potential for how an ironsmith in particular may have been perceived because of his mobility. The following discussion will explore how the perception of a mobile ironsmith may have worked to assemble the identity of the craftworker through the actions performed by the smith himself.

Assembling identity

Identity can be defined in myriad ways. In the past scholars adopted the model of a dichotomy to describe the difference between the self-definition of an individual and the socially enacted persona (discussed by Smith 2007, 414). However, because archaeology is concerned with reconstructing the social processes of the past (Meskell and Preucel 2007, 124), and is often unequipped to assess the psychology of the non-living, what I am defining here as “identity” is the social placement of an individual, reflexively constructed by himself and the perceptions of those around him. Every individual inhabits a place within this framework, stemming from an infinite series of actions performed by him and every other person. This phenomenon can be conceived as: “the patterning of social relations in time-space involving the reproduction of situated practices” (Giddens 1984, 17). From this historically-constituted position, the individual is involved in a continuous process of enacting his identity. This set of circumstances provided the itinerant smith, and those using his products, with the context to reproduce his identity. The existence of any particular social identity is defined by the actions that constitute its placement in the framework of a community. As Gardner (2011, 17) suggests, “the activities that people undertake ... are the mechanisms by which people are categorized by others, or themselves, as they interact.” The actions or practices that are performed on an everyday basis or that are executed uniquely work within a social sphere to construct, reproduce, or reaffirm the position of that actor. As mobile ironsmiths traveled from community to community, their social identities were being formed through their productive actions and experiences with their craft. The performance of production provided numerous instances of human experience, from those witnessing the activity to those using the iron products, all of which contributed to the assembling of smith identity.

Performance

The event(s) of iron production provided a theater for meaning-making through the activities involved in smelting iron bloom from iron ore and forging an object from a bloom or ingot. These actions can be viewed through the lens of performance as outlined by Erving Goffman (1959, 22), as “the activity of an individual which occurs during a period marked by his continuous presence before a particular set of observers and which has some influence on the observers.” The benefit of such a broad conceptualization of performance (also discussed in Coben and Inomata 2006) is the realization that social actions such as skilled production may have had aspects of performance, possibly unrecognized by the participants, that shaped the behavior of the primary actor at center stage (the smith) and that added to the consumer’s perception of the smith. Here I use the term consumer broadly, in both economic terms as an individual using the ironsmith’s product but also as one who is co-constructing the identity of the smith through participation in the performance of production, as an observer or direct participant. In this way, consumer and audience are equivalent. The conception of performance I am using may be placed in the middle of a spectrum between everyday activities as performance and spectacle (Inomata and Coben 2006, 13–15). Judith Butler (1993, 15) highlighted the repetition necessary in gender performativity for the materialization of norms. In this same way, the actions of production were part of what shaped or recreated the smith’s identity. Those actions witnessed by an audience created what it meant to be a smith: they were productive in terms of material goods as well as social persona. Yet these

performances of production likely also included major aspects of prescribed action that were meant to be witnessed. Peter Schmidt (2009, 272) recorded these types of activities among the Barongo, recalling that during the production of the smelting furnace the head smelter and the head ritual authority would sit back to back, unclothed, and rhythmically push a mound of dirt into the pit. This performance represented a “metonymic act of intercourse” with the furnace, referencing aspects of fertility while also acting to recreate the smelter’s positionality among the community (Schmidt 2009, 272).

The potential for performative action and meaning-making existed in many stages of the iron production process. The most common form of iron is as part of a chemical compound (either iron oxides, carbonates, or sulphides) associated with a variety of minerals (Scott 1990). These iron ores must be processed to remove the excess minerals and isolate the metallic iron in a process known as smelting. Unlike smelting copper, the product of iron smelting is not in molten form, but is rather a spongy mass known as a raw bloom. This bloom can then be worked through a series of heating and cooling episodes, during which the iron is hammered and shaped (Scott 1990; Manning 1995; Pleiner 2000). In Goffman’s formulation, the “setting” for these actions would have included the physical layout where work took place and the décor or structures used in the production of iron (1959, 22). Pieces of the set ranged from tools used by the smith for shaping iron artifacts that included anvils, tongs, hammers, setts, chisels, punches, and drifts, to the furnace itself (Scott 1990, 21). The production “stage” and pieces used on this stage all had meaning that would have been interpreted by the audience.

In order to more fully grasp this meaning and its impact on smith identity it should be noted that the technological practices involved in the production of iron were not solely isolated techniques, but included aspects of symbolism that saturated those practices (Hingley 1997, 9; Childs 1999). As previous ethnographic and archaeological studies have demonstrated, iron may have a distinct symbolic association at each stage of its trajectory (Haaland *et al.* 2002), often involving sexual metaphors and taboos associated with the smelting process (Barndon 2004; Haaland 2004; Giles 2007). This smelting performance, where ore is transformed into bloom, frequently invokes associations with reproduction and birth through references to the shape and function of the furnace and associated apparatuses (Giles 2007, 401). There are also often taboos related to the type of person with access to the smelt (Herbert 1993). Additionally, Gansum (2004) has argued that in some cases these technical practices may even have been imbued with references to the dead with the use of expropriated bones as fuel. Whether reproductive, sexual, or regenerative metaphors were referenced during the production of iron, the performance of the smith created very specific associations in the minds of the consumer. These associations would have undoubtedly affected the identity-making of the ironsmith as the activities involved in iron production were potent arenas for metaphor and symbolism. The symbolic associations enacted through the performance of the smith and afforded by the setting of the smelt were internalized by the consumer and factored into how the smith was perceived, and in doing so how his identity was in a constant process of assembling during each performance.

In order to interpret the performative actions of the smith, both symbolic and technical, the performance had to “fit” into the cultural logic of the audience. When thinking through this facet of performance, it is useful to keep in mind how Richard Bauman (1977) sees performance as a form of communicative behavior, conveying information in much the

same way as speech. He suggests that just like verbal communication, the recipient of the performance must have a preexisting logic to provide context in order to interpret the signals of the performer, just as the performer needs to demonstrate his ability to perform the actions.

Fundamentally, performance as a mode of spoken verbal communication consists in the assumption of responsibility to an audience for a display of communicative competence. This competence rests on the knowledge and ability to speak in socially appropriate ways. (Bauman 1977, 11)

And though a strict structural linguistic interpretation of this idea may seem to be contradictory to the ongoing process of identity formation I am proposing, I would suggest that the act of production that is experienced by the audience is not part of a *creation* of smith identity but rather a process of *recreating* and *adding to* identity. By this I mean that for the performative referents to be part of the identity-making process, they need to be understood (in some way) within an existing framework. So while the audience was grounded in this framework, the identity of the smith was established through the meeting of, or alteration to, expectations. In the case of the smith, factors such as innovation and competence were assessed by his audience as part of his identity-making. As is the case for any social persona, the smith's identity was assembled by those who interacted with him and engaged with his products. The concepts of innovation and competence are a useful pair to think through processes of production and consumer evaluation: competence as an alignment with traditional practice and innovation as a deviation from it. Though not opposed, innovation and competence are two facets of a production event, both of which are maintained by the perception of the consumer. As Keller and Keller (1996, 9) note, the activity system of the smith rests upon a shared foundation of knowledge (traditions) but is affected by significant diversity. I would expand this conception of tradition to include not only the foundation of knowledge by the smith, but also the idealized perception of an iron product by the consumer. The consumer assessed the competence of the ironsmith in part based on his alignment with tradition, or at least perceived tradition. The iron product needed to fit into a perceived ideal form of the object. But the object also had to fulfill its function, and the identity of the smith could be altered based on the perceived success or failure. This perception of success or failure shaped the consumer's view of the smith's competence in the performance of iron production. Though he was speaking to the treatment of oral myths as tradition, Giddens identifies the structuration that occurs in the enactments of past ideals: "However, tradition is first and foremost embedded in, and the means of reproduction of, the practices that constitute day-to-day activities" (Giddens 1987, 147). Through his activities the smith constructed the context for his own reproduction. By performing a smelt or swinging a hammer the smith both created what it meant to *be* a smith as well as maintained the tradition *of* the smith. This experience was used by the audience to reference past memories of ironworking techniques or products and thus aligned with the expectations of the consumer. While the consumer saw competence if the production matched expectations, the smith also could deviate through innovation.

Innovation played its part in identity creation by providing an element of 'newness' or novelty. A substantial technological transition was occurring in the period when iron began to be used in Europe. The physical properties or affordances (Gibson 1979; Knappett 2004) of iron were different from those of bronze and required a change in production techniques. The technology of iron production required many generations of refinement before the

craftworker could manufacture something suitable for use as a tool or weapon. Through this process of improvement the element of novelty played strongly into the perception of iron in the social world. This novelty was a facet of smith identity, assessed during innovative production techniques. Each of the different stages of the production process was susceptible to the smith's choices, thus a possible locus for changes to traditional practices (i.e., innovation). For example Paynter (2007) has traced innovations in furnace types, differences in ores, and types of fuel utilized in the Iron Age in Britain based on slag morphology and composition. The smith's choices during production had both direct and indirect repercussions within the larger sociotechnical system: new resource locations were used and old locations were abandoned, networks of exchange were broken down and new ones developed, and individual relationships with the processes of production were altered. The importance of choice created a delicate balance between innovation and tradition. There was an existing framework in the mind of the consumer as to what *made* an axe or a hoe. It was therefore the actions of the smith, aligning or not with the audience's conceptions of competence, which acted to recreate the identity of the smith. The performance was productive in influencing smith identity by re-establishing the framework for which his actions were experienced by the audience. The smith embodied the productive actions, affecting the perceptions of his audience and providing the context for the assembling of his own social position. It was the tension between a perceived tradition by the audience and the choices of the smith to follow or not follow that tradition that meant each event of production added to the smith's identity and provided an ever-changing assembling of the persona. And yet, as each setting of production constructed a new context for recreating identity, a single event of meaning-making, the moments after and before these events also provided contexts for the consumer to assess the smith and assemble his identity. In this way, identity was being assembled through unending moments in time, tied strongly to the smith's movement in and out of communities.

Mobility and temporalities

The mobile nature of the itinerant smith created a few basic conditions through which the performance of production would have occurred. These conditions in turn shaped how those performances were experienced and were part of the assembling of the smith's identity. First is the movement across the landscape – that he is able, both physically and socially, to move between communities. To meet the needs of a dispersed settlement pattern with limited population density, it would have benefited the smiths to be quite mobile, travelling between settlements, as stationary smiths would likely have satisfied their clientele quickly, as Kusimba (1996) described for Swahili smiths. The mobility of the itinerant smith was characteristic of a position within society that was at once necessary for dispersed settlements that required iron technologies, while at the same time enforced a specific identity for the smith. In this case, mobility provided a complex dialectic between insider and outsider. The movement between communities required a pan-regional identity. That is, the smith was not a member of the community but necessary for societal reproduction. Mary Helms (1993, 128–45) has argued for a specific aura of 'otherness' embodied by the traveling craftworker, linked to an association with long distances. And while this liminality may not have been formalized, there must have been an understanding, explicit or tacit, that this individual could pass through a landscape unharmed. The symbolic associations available for

identity formation in this context lay in the ability to move between or through boundaries, while maintaining a quality of the unknown. The liminality of smiths has rich history in anthropological and ethnoarchaeological research (see Haour 2013, 83–95 for elaboration on the subject). In both spatial and social terms, the smith in some West African societies is positioned as an ‘outsider,’ betwixt and between communities (Haour 2013). The itinerant smith represented a physical and social mobility that worked to structure the perception of his identity by those who required his services yet were not completely privy to his craft.

For the itinerant smith, this aspect of the ‘outsider’ becomes something closer to Georg Simmel’s (1950) ‘wanderer’. While Simmel’s ‘stranger’ is characterized by his origin outside of the group, he is a “potential wanderer” whose position in society is determined “by the fact that he has not belonged to it from the beginning” (Simmel 1950, 402). However, for the itinerant smith an important feature of his lifestyle is that he is someone who “comes today and goes tomorrow” (Simmel 1950, 402). The second condition that shaped the experience of iron production was that the events used to inform the conception of the smith were limited by the punctuated moments of iron production that occurred throughout the year. This means that at the times when the smith was not present, the identity of the smith was tied to those intermittent performances through audience conception. In their discussion of the mobility of things, Hahn and Weiss (2013) emphasize the non-linear component of mobile objects, and the constant re-construction of meaning. Deconstructing other approaches to object mobility, they reach the term *itinerary* to engage with the entangled notion of mobility (Hahn and Weiss 2013, 8). And though speaking directly to the issue of object mobility, their term has applications to the discussion of meaning-making that occurs during the movement of individuals: “To itinerate is also a verbal expression: when things (or people) itinerate, they travel along a previously set course” (Hahn and Weiss 2013, 8). Following a path that had been set in the past allowed the smith to build upon past performances of production and displays of competence. So though he still occupied a realm of the semi-unknown, the smith’s identity was built on the consumer’s perceptions of past interactions. Mobility thus allowed the smith a unique position within society, inside and outside, present and absent – features which also determined how the consumer could conceive of the smith in different temporalities.

While the punctuated events of production required the consumer to draw on past performances to inform their conception of the smith, these moments of performance also incorporated ideas about the future: future needs and the availability of the smith at a later time. In a 2003 lecture, Nancy Munnn (2004, 4) presented an account of Edgar Allen Poe walking the streets of Manhattan and commenting on the dilapidated mansions that he passed:

The old [“wood”] mansions upon [these “picturesque” localities] ... remain unrepaired, and present a melancholy spectacle of decrepitude. In fact, these magnificent places are doomed. The spirit of Improvement has withered them with its acrid breath. Streets are already “mapped” through them, and they are no longer suburban residences, but “town-lots”.

Poe describes these mansions in multiple temporalities; while commenting on their decrepit state in the present, he remarks on their one-time greatness and foretells the “spirit of Improvement” converting these former residences into future streets (Munn 2004, 4–5). It is this type of in-the-moment amalgam of temporal experiences that also characterized the re-creation of smith identity at the times when he was moving through the community.

Just as Poe considered the memory of a great mansion and imagined a future for these structures, a consumer observing the smith would have considered past experiences as well as prospective future needs.

The mobility of the itinerant smith produced questions surrounding the future of the smith and his availability to perform his craft. For example, when will the smith be able to next make an object, and how long can the object be used? The itinerant worker was never in the same place for very long because of the nature of this mode of production, and there would always have been some uncertainty about the time of his next visit. It was this aspect of uncertainty that had to be addressed as each individual engaged with the smith. Since the smith was not part of the everyday life of the community, his arrival and productive activities were disruptive to what Giddens (1987, 148) would call time-space zones, or the way in which individuals trace out their day-to-day lives. For Giddens (1987, 148–51), the time-reckoning which followed the development of widespread literacy allowed individuals to more easily coordinate their time-space zones, inevitably leading to wider availability for control. Yet prior to the rigid standardization of modern time-space, individuals would have relied on experiences to reproduce daily life, and any intrusion (i.e., the smith) needed to be ‘dealt with.’ As the perception of the world was constructed from past experiences and imagined futures, people formed conceptions of others in their present as well as these other temporalities. Therefore, throwing in a semi-unknown entity that had to be ‘dealt with’ required an at-once, in-progress mixture of what we would refer to as the past, present and future. It was at the events of production that these imagined futures, tied to mobility and competence, were brought together with perceptions of innovation and traditions. The performances, saturated with symbolic associations, provided a focus for multi-temporal meaning-making. The perception of competency, as adherence to tradition, was built upon a remembrance of past experiences with the smith and an expectation of how a smith should act.

Expectations of the consumer had to be met to constitute what they would have perceived as a success. Not only did the iron object need be perceived to fit with the ideal form of the object, but it also must have performed its function as conceived of by the consumer. If the smith had in the past produced an object that fulfilled the function for which it was commissioned, then to that consumer his identity was consolidated by this perception of past competence. On the other hand, if the iron object failed in its operation, this lack of competence reframed his identity as a smith, or at least the type of smith he was identified as. The consumers based their perception of competence not only on past successes, or current ideal frameworks, but on potential future success as well. The imagined future that involved the use of the iron object by the consumer would in the present moment alter how the smith was perceived. In the assembling of the smith’s identity we have many moments of meaning-making. At the events of production, the performance of the smith acted to inform conceptions of competence and perceived innovative action. After these events, the time when the smith was not performing the productive actions, his identity was being assembled through the audience’s engagement with their own memories of past performances and imagined futures. Johnson and Schneider (2013) present a similar conception of how the memory of performance shapes social roles after the fact. They argue that in order to continue to form impressions of a funerary performance, the audience must rely on memories of the event or the performance must be continually reinforced through successive funerary events (Johnson and Schneider 2013, 235–6). The smith’s identity was continually reformed by the

audience during the events of production. Yet the moments in between production events were also in play for the assembling of the smith, where memories of past production and ideas about future performances informed audience conception. It was in this way that the creation and assembling of the itinerant smith's identity was a multi-temporal negotiation of present experience and perceptions of past performance and future needs.

The Iron Age smith in Ireland

The first half of the Iron Age in Ireland (see Table 7.1) presents an interesting case study to think through the possibility for an itinerant mode of iron production, due to the enigmatic nature of the archaeological evidence for iron production as well as the apparent contrast that exists between the Continent and Britain. The limited archaeological evidence, and the subsequently limited research that has been conducted on the Iron Age in Ireland in the last half century results from a number of factors, the most significant of which is the preservation bias. However, the 'Celtic Tiger' economic boom of the early 2000s led to extensive infrastructural development, which brought with it significant new archaeological data from National Roads Authority projects. In 2008, Becker, Ó Néill, and O'Flynn completed a project that documented all of the known sites dating to the Iron Age, illustrating that people of Iron Age Ireland were not in fact 'invisible' in the way presented by Barry Raftery in his 1994 monograph. And yet, despite the comparatively high influx of data for this period, more questions have been raised than answered regarding settlement patterns, ways of treating the dead, and the role of craftworkers. From the evidence, settlements during the Iron Age were single or extended-family homesteads, likely maintaining domesticated animals or agricultural fields (Cooney and Grogan 1994; Becker 2011; Ó Drisceoil and Devine 2012). The structures were primarily unenclosed roundhouses with occasional associated industrial activities (Ó Drisceoil and Devine 2012, 260–1). It is possible that different types of settlements indicated differential social roles, similar to the Early Medieval period (see O'Sullivan *et al.* 2013). The settlements appear to be extremely dispersed across the landscape, indicating a very low population density. In fact, just 12 settlements with house structures that can be radiocarbon dated to the Iron Age in Ireland have been identified (Ó Drisceoil and Devine 2012, 260–1). The burial record is dominated by cremation burials, often in ringbarrows (McGarry 2008). However, the mortuary record is extremely varied and still relatively small compared to the Continent. There are currently 74 sites containing approximately 130 individuals that date from 800 BCE to 400 CE, most with few or no associated artifacts, making precise dating difficult (McGarry 2008).

While the archaeological data may appear to be limiting on the surface, I would agree with those who have argued that we should be focusing on interpreting the data as it exists

Table 7.1. *Chronology for Iron Age in Ireland (after Becker et al. 2008)*

<i>Irish Iron Age</i>	
Early Iron Age	700–400 BCE
Developed Iron Age	400–0 BCE/CE
Late Iron Age	0 BCE/CE–400 CE

rather than focusing on an excavation bias or absence of evidence (Dolan 2014). It now seems that with the influx of archaeological data, the Irish Iron Age can be explained with much more support than ever before (Armit 2007; Becker 2012; Corlett and Potterton 2013). The lack of pottery in this period, the dispersed settlement pattern, and the limited craft production sites each points to a more mobile lifestyle being adopted by Iron Age peoples in Ireland (Dolan 2014). Specifically, the evidence for iron production seems to fit with this mobile pattern. Much of what has been used to reconstruct the role of the ironsmith in Ireland during the Iron Age actually originates from Early Medieval law tracts, annals, or myths and legends that were later recorded. Aside from the potential biases within the written texts, a major criticism for their application to Iron Age contexts is the temporal discontinuity with the archaeological material. Although the law tracts may date to the 7th or 8th centuries CE, they are most often preserved in later manuscripts, further distancing the account from the assumed source (Comber 2008, 13). Yet with these caveats in mind, looking to these pieces of evidence does provide some background on how the smith may have been perceived in the period immediately following the Iron Age. Scott (1983; 1988; 1990) has dealt extensively with the literary evidence for ironworking and the blacksmith and how it related to the archaeological evidence in the later Iron Age and Early Medieval periods, though unfortunately there was never a ‘smith-history’ recorded for the Island. Comber (2008, 20), in her larger discussion of settlements and production in early medieval Ireland, notes that this period has evidence for the movement of smiths across the landscape and between communities:

However, in some ways the smith was more privileged than other nobles. The metalworker was, for example, free to move between *tuatha* whereas other craftworkers were not. This may have been to facilitate the transfer of ore, stock and artifacts from one type of production site to another, or to the final consumer. No specialist traders are mentioned in the laws, suggesting the possibility that the smiths themselves undertook the relevant transactions.

This is not to say that the hierarchical relationships documented for the early medieval period were analogous to those 1500 years prior, but that there is some later evidence for the mobility of ironworkers in the region. Additionally, although not specific to ironsmiths, the potential for a mobile lifestyle associated with tinkers maintained a place in Irish society up through the 20th century (Court 1985). With the archaeological record as it now stands, and looking to ethnographic and historical analogies, the notion of an itinerant smith remains a plausible option to explain the mode of production for early ironworking in Ireland.

Aside from historical sources, a tradition of archaeometallurgical analysis focusing on iron has been limited in Ireland for a number of reasons, but is primarily a consequence of the limited number of early iron artifacts and ironworking byproducts available before the recent excavation boom of the 2000s. B. G. Scott published the last comprehensive analysis and synthesis of early ironworking in Ireland in 1990, and though exhaustive it was unfortunately prior to the discoveries of the 2000s. Brian Dolan’s unpublished PhD dissertation (2012) and article (2014) were significant steps in accounting for the influx of new sites and archaeological evidence related to iron production through a synthesis of the new sites. My own preliminary analysis has identified between 30 and 40 sites (depending on the dating accuracy of associated contexts) that have evidence for some stage of iron production during the first 700 years of the Iron Age in Ireland (Fig. 7.1). The majority of these sites are not large, meaning they were likely used for small-scale production or were not used for long

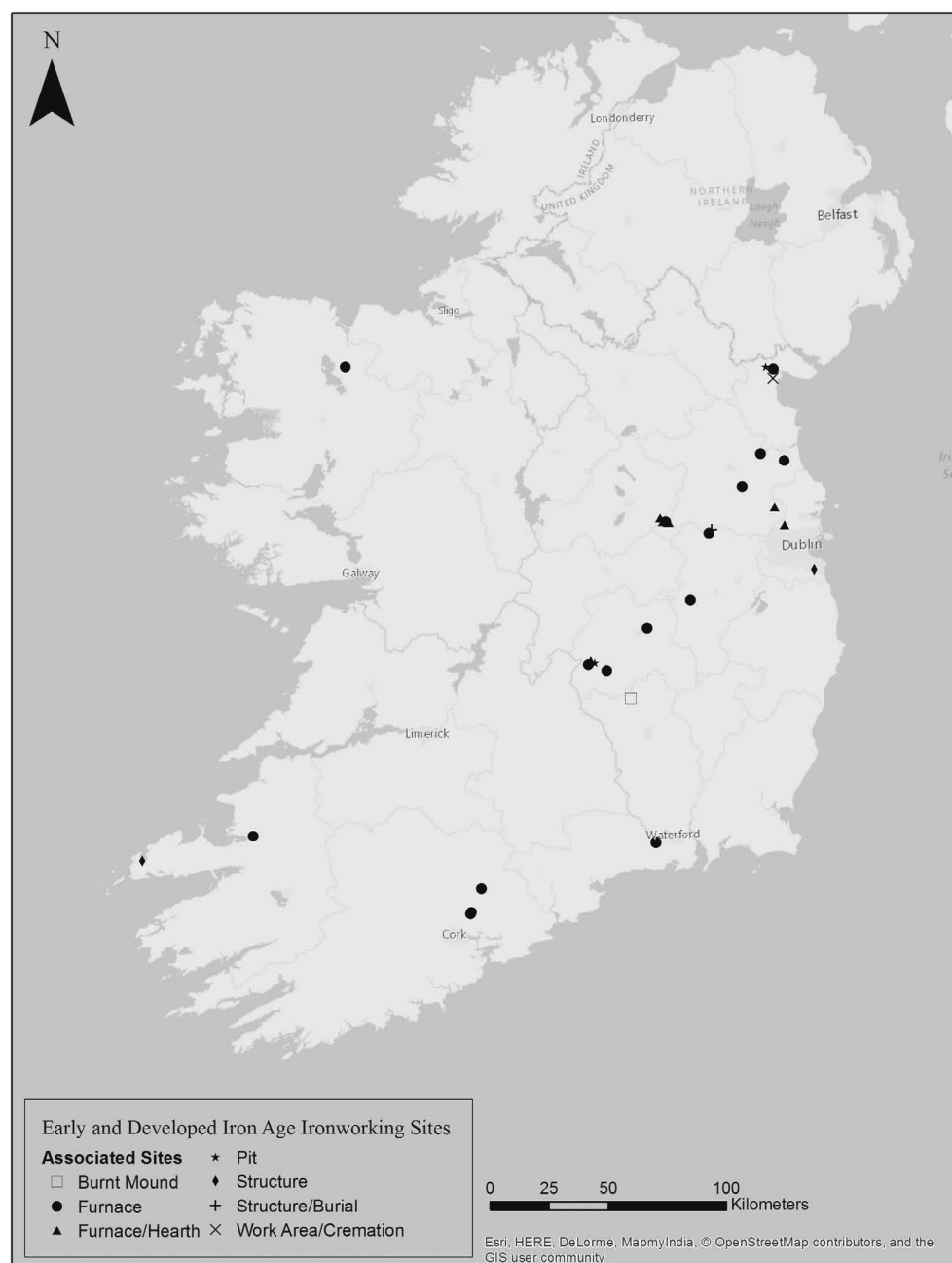


Fig. 7.1. Early Iron Age–Developed Iron Age ironworking sites and the features found in association with them

periods of time. Most of the sites that demonstrated evidence for smelting contained less than three furnaces, with a few sites that have evidence for six to eight furnaces. The outlier is Derrinsallagh 4, Co. Laois, where evidence for 41 furnaces was recovered (Lennon 2009). Additionally, the slag recovered from these sites amounts to just a few kilograms per site, indicating that there was not significant iron being produced at each site (Dolan 2014, 365). As Dolan (2014, 365) notes, the small amount of iron produced at a single site in Ireland during this period stands in contrast to the production of iron in Britain by those using similar technology, and indicates a much different organization of production. The archaeological picture of ironworking sites during this period looks to be one of limited productive use over short periods of time. Adding to this picture are the associated features, or in many cases the lack of associated features. Many of the sites containing some evidence of iron production are completely isolated, with evidence in the immediate vicinity for only furnaces or pits. Those that are not completely isolated are sometimes found with other non-domestic features, such as burnt mounds (Parksgrrove 1, Co. Kilkenny) or re-used burial space that dates back to the Final Neolithic–Early Bronze Age transition (Harlockstown 19, Co. Meath) (Stevens 2005; O'Connor 2008). The association with types of non-industrial features presents an interesting aspect to iron production and the activities associated with the smith. Proximity to burials may indicate that even if cremated bone was not used in the production process, as Gansum (2004) has suggested, the locational association would have imbued the smith's actions with references to the dead or even re-birth. Adding to the already complicated picture of ironworking in Ireland is the suggestion that smelting occurred solely in isolated areas, maintaining a level of secrecy or hidden knowledge of the technology. In contrast, smithing occurred at publicly visible places where the audience could see the actions of the smith (Dolan 2014, 365). If this pattern was indeed supported in the archaeological record it would have significant impact on how we understand the way that the activities of the smith acted to recreate smith identity through audience perception and experience.

The itinerant smith's mode of production currently stands as a scholarly construct, but it is one possible explanation (among many) for the archaeological record in Ireland in this period. As people transitioned to a more mobile lifestyle during the Iron Age, with limited population density, the itinerant smith could have provided access to iron products for settlements dispersed on the landscape. The itinerant mode of production could also account for the limited-use sites and would fit into the economy expected for the period. As iron technology emerged in Ireland around the 8th century BCE, the identity of the smith was rooted in the performative action of production. During a smelt, a furnace was built and loaded with the proper material. Then at various stages of smithing a hammer was taken to the iron bloom and used to shape it into an iron object. The activities of building the furnace, heating the furnace with a bellows, dragging out liquid slag through a furnace tap, hammering out the iron bloom, heating and quenching, and shaping and folding were actions that could be witnessed by the audience. There existed a conception of what was 'supposed to happen' at these events in the minds of the audience, a perception of how an iron piece was constructed. This tradition of ironmaking allowed the actions to be understood by the audience and may have even referenced conceptions of fertility or death. And yet there was alteration, changes made to the preconceived idea of how to make an iron object. By the choices made during production, the smith created a tension between innovation and tradition. Mediating this tension allowed the audience to at once maintain the framework

to understand the smith's actions while also recreating what it meant to be a smith. It was the time of production where the actions of the smith were perceived by the audience and recreated the smith's identity. But since identity is always in progress, the smith's identity was also recreated after the moments of production. The mobility of the itinerant smith allowed for only punctuated experiences of production events, so it was through the audience's interaction with the iron products, their memories of productive performances, and their imagined futures of when the smith would return that the smith's identity was continually assembled. The assembling of the identity of the smith was concomitantly occurring through the memories and imagined futures of his audience, those consuming the products, and through productive actions performed by the smith.

Conclusions

I have argued that thinking about identity in terms of a constant process of assembling allows us to engage with multiple elements of experience such as the performance of production events, the actions involved in shaping audience perception, and an individual's physical movement through society. The itinerant smith represented a unique persona within society, characterized by his performative actions during iron production as well as his mobility across the landscape. The performances of production provided a venue for the smith to reproduce his own social position by his actions and choices. The audience's perception of the smith was recreated by witnessing these actions. Alignment with, or deviation from, the audience's preconceptions of iron production provided the smith's identity with a facet of competence, as his actions produced both physical object and social persona. The mobility of the smith added a dimension of liminality to his identity, betwixt and between society, while also providing punctuated events of performance for the identity of the smith to be recreated. The assembling of the smith's identity consisted of many moments of meaning-making brought together as the audience used memories of past experiences and ideas about the future to constantly recreate their conceptions of the smith. This process of assembling maintains an always-in-motion, never fully complete, identity.

Though the preceding discussion is focused on the assembling of identity in a past context, I would be remiss to ignore the present, archaeological aspect of identity formation and meaning-making that recreates smith identity. Not only was identity incomplete during the life of the smith, but its in-progress nature also proceeds from our current, modern interaction with the material traces of his life. Bettina Arnold (2012, 87), in her discussion of simultaneous temporalities in Iron Age mortuary contexts, notes that as archaeologists construct time through their interactions with artifacts, the objects are subject to different contexts and intersections of experience. As archaeologists experience the material remains of the smith, the traces of the smith's productive performances, we continue to assemble the smith's identity in the present. When discussing the past and present experiences with a jet necklace found in Kyloe, in Northumberland, Chris Fowler (2013, 246) outlines how interactions with the artifact in the present configure and extend the meaning as we currently experience it, just as its use in prehistory shaped its meaning:

Thus, just as the actions of prehistoric people, the effects of prehistoric relationships and the legacy of prehistoric practices and technologies extended the phenomenon of the Kyloe necklace

by making a cist and putting the necklace, a body (probably), and a pot within it; just as the relations that keep jet being jet are going on all the time, so our actions, technologies, ideas, and practices in the present further extend the necklace in different directions. *Any object, any assemblage, is extended by our interactions with it, just as it has been extended by past interactions.*

The recovery of slag at an excavation provides a context for the archaeologist to experience the material trace of a smelting performance, and the uncovering of an iron artifact creates a venue to interact with the product of smithing. Through the interpretation of that slag or iron object, we develop a conception of the smith: his maintenance of a production tradition or the changes made to the techniques of production. In this way we are participating in the continual process of meaning-making that is involved in assembling past identity. As we continue to interact with a fragment of both artifacts and past experiences, the incomplete nature of this assembling persists.

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8.

Reassembling the king: transforming the tomb of Gustav Vasa, 1560–2014

Joseph Gonzalez

Sixteenth-century Sweden was witness to extraordinary social, cultural, religious, and political change. Gustav Vasa (king 1523–1560) was at the center of the most significant of these transformations, founding an independent Swedish state, establishing a hereditary monarchy, and beginning the reformation of the church. His death shook Sweden to its foundations and motivated his heirs to stage the most elaborate funeral in Swedish history and to erect a tomb of unprecedented splendor in memory of the king and as an act of dynastic promotion. The monarchy founded by Gustav Vasa continues to rule Sweden to the present day, and Vasa's centrality to the founding of the Swedish state has provided him a continuing role in Swedish history. But the concept of a monarchy based on a divine right promoted by Gustav Vasa and his heirs went out of fashion long ago, and the king of Sweden today is little more than a national symbol, an expression of historical tradition. This evolution in ideals of royal power and shifts in perceptions of Vasa's relevance to Swedish history has been matched by slow but steady adjustments to the royal tomb and chapel that mirror changing views of Gustav Vasa, the monarchy, and Swedish social and political conditions. Vasa's tomb and chapel in Uppsala cathedral have been the subject of a process of additions and subtractions, assemblings and reassemblings, that began even before the king died and that continue to the current day, an ongoing process of meaning making centered on the corpse of a king who has been dead for over 450 years.

KEYWORDS: GUSTAV VASA, TOMB, MONARCHY

On September 9, 1087, William the Conqueror said his confession and breathed his last in the presence of the leading noblemen and clerics of his realm. The moment he died, pandemonium broke out. The great men in attendance fled with their retainers and, in their absence, the royal servants sacked the palace, leaving the king's body sprawled naked on the floor (Boüard 1984, 436–7).

The case of William the Conqueror illustrates a central problem faced by the European medieval and early modern monarchy. Power was personal. Government – indeed the very state – was embodied in the king. Thus the death of the king, his physical disintegration, threatened the realm with a similar disintegration.

In response, Western European monarchies devised a number of strategies to counter this threat, either by undertaking to prevent the appearance of the disintegration of the king's body or by distinguishing the mortal body of the king from his immortal majesty, thus promoting an ideal of royal power that was both stable and eternal. In France and England an ideology of power was promoted that has been famously termed the "Doctrine of the King's Two Bodies." According to this doctrine the king was possessed of one mortal body and, simultaneously, an immortal body constituted of eternal royal majesty. This view of the monarchy was reflected in the French adage *le roi ne meurt jamais* ("the king never dies") (Kantorowicz 1957, 383–450). By 1500 in practice this meant that after death the body of the king was reassembled both actually and symbolically through embalming, dressing, endowing with regalia, representation by wax effigies and sepulchral monuments, and through the proliferation of symbols (such as banners or heraldic devices) and the design of memorial spaces (funerary chapels, monumental statues, etc.) (Kantorowicz 1957; Giesey 1960; Woodward 1997; Gonzalez 1999; Grundberg 2005; Schraven 2006; Candréus 2008).

Royal funerals provided an ideal location for this type of promotion. The memory of the deceased king was elaborated, provided ritual expression, and ratified by the funeral participants. This allowed for both the establishment of a socially recognized precedent and for new ideologies of royal power to be generated and promulgated by the heirs of the royal body. The majority of current studies of this practice have assumed that the process was concluded with the funeral, or perhaps with the erection of the monument (Giesey 1960; Gonzalez 1999; Grundberg 2005). However, the emergence of theoretical approaches to the social dimensions of things calls these assumptions into question (Hodder 2012). While it is certainly the case that the royal body disappeared from mortal view fairly quickly and that numerous royal graves from the Middle Ages quickly passed into oblivion, others maintained their prominence in the social, cultural, or political landscape for generations or even centuries. For this reason the perspectives developed by authors such as Richard Bradley (1998), who focuses on the evolution of prehistoric monuments in the *longue durée*, and Daniel Miller (2005), who considers the ways in which materiality is utilized by human beings to make the world correspond to their ideals, provide useful points of departure for the understanding of royal grave monuments of the early modern period. These tombs participated in a process that was complex, open-ended, and intimately related to their social and cultural historical contexts. Two issues are of particular importance here. First, generating a foundation for an ideal of power invariably relied on an appeal to precedent, and for this reason choosing a location for and constructing a royal tomb, with a few notable exceptions, involved reconstructing or repurposing older culturally significant sites. Secondly, it can be demonstrated that the process of reassembling the king, so carefully carried out by his heirs, did not end with his funeral, or even in the years immediately following. Rather, royal tombs became sites not only for the preservation of the mortal royal body but also for the representation of its 'immortal' form – that is, royal power. As such the tomb was intentionally and continually manipulated, assembled, disassembled, and re-assembled to meet the needs of the living society and in response to their changing understandings of

royal power. This process is analogous to the strategies of forgetting and remembering described by Howard Williams (2010) in his study of death and memory in early medieval Britain. Williams reveals the ways in which mortuary practices provide a context within which dead bodies, material objects, monuments, and spaces influence the ways in which mourners interact with each other and contribute to the generation of social memory. This complex process involves selective remembering and forgetting, invocation of the past, and simultaneously, the invocation of aspirations for the future (Williams 2010, 1–35). In the case of the royal tombs of early modern Europe this process continued for centuries. Indeed, it may be said to continue even in the present day. For this reason it can be said that these tombs have never been completed. They are, rather, constantly emerging from their cultural historical matrix to meet the needs of an evolving present.

One excellent example is the tomb of Gustav Vasa, king of Sweden from 1523 to 1560. Gustav Vasa was in many ways the founder of the Swedish state and continues to play a central role in Swedish culture and identity (Larsson 2002, 7–10). Having led the rebellion against the centuries-old Danish-ruled Kalmar Union, Vasa was elected king of Sweden in 1523 and moved swiftly to consolidate his rule. The Reformation helped to put the crown on solid financial ground, and Vasa instituted measures to strengthen royal authority and centralize government institutions. By 1544 he had eliminated any serious challenges to his rule. At the Riksdag of Västerås he persuaded the estates to transform the monarchy from elective to hereditary and to recognize his eldest son as crown prince and heir (Roberts 1970; Behre, Larsson and Österberg 1985, 22–45; Svalenius 1992, 1–68, 205–9; Bagge 2014, 280–5).

Yet the king and his family were aware that the majority of Europe's rulers regarded them as upstarts, rebels, or worse (Johannesson 1969, 25; 1991, 213–5; Svalenius 1992, 132–3). They undertook to counter this impression though propaganda generated by the royal chancellery (Johannesson 1969), the educational program initiated for the young princes (Norman 1890), and concerted efforts to polish the royal image by dressing in the latest European court fashions and promoting a regal image through the arts (Larsson 2002, 227–31). Despite these efforts, when the king died in the fall of 1560 the dynasty's insecurities reached a fever pitch. There were fears that the Danish king might try to reassert his rights over the kingdom, that the nobility would refuse to recognize the hereditary principle despite their assurances given at the Riksdag, or that another claimant to the throne might emerge from the ranks of one of the powerful old noble families. Consequently, in this moment of particular urgency, the king's heirs arranged for the most elaborate royal burial in Swedish history. The funeral was designed and orchestrated with extraordinary care. It was an essential part of their strategy to demonstrate the true majesty of the Vasa dynasty and to simultaneously promote an ideal of royal power that would provide both foundation and precedent for Gustav Vasa's successors on the throne (Gonzalez 1999, 105–204; Grundberg 2005, 41–68).

There is no question that the funeral accomplished much of what the Vasas desired, at least for the domestic audience. The stately pomp, the extravagant rituals, and the scholarly orations that accompanied Gustav Vasa's burial succeeded in promoting a memory of the king as the savior of Sweden and God's true anointed king, and helped to smooth the way for his sons' ascent to power (Gonzalez 2006). The monarchy founded by Gustav Vasa, if not the dynasty, continues to the present day, although the "divine right" variety of monarchy

promoted by Gustav Vasa and his heirs went out of fashion long ago; today the king of Sweden is little more than a national symbol, an expression of historical tradition with an uncertain future. This evolution of royal power, a slow but steady adjustment to contemporary views and conditions, was mirrored in Gustav Vasa's tomb and chapel in Uppsala Cathedral. The tomb and the chapel that contains it has for centuries been the subject of additions and subtractions, assemblings and reassemblings, as the significance of the tomb and its occupant has shifted and transformed. Ultimately, Gustav Vasa and Sweden are deeply entangled, and the tomb provides a surprisingly detailed record of their long and evolving relationship.

Royal bodies

Gustav Vasa was the founder of a new dynasty ruling an ancient kingdom. The Swedish kingdom had long been an elective monarchy by law but ruled as a *de facto* province of the Danish realm by the Danish king as part of the Kalmar Union (Larsson 2002). Consequently, there were no protocols or established traditions for dealing with the royal dead. Indeed, as the Vasa monarchy stabilized, consolidated its hold on power, and transitioned from elective to hereditary kingship, the ways in which the bodies of their deceased family members were treated changed. The degree of change was unquestionably magnified by the concurrent shift in religion, from Catholic to Lutheran. In other words, the social, political, and cultural changes that Vasa's reign unleashed were registered on the bodies of the royal family and the tombs that commemorated them.

Gustav Vasa came to the throne in 1523 and was married three times. Two of his wives had pre-deceased him when he died in 1560. His first wife was Katerina von Sax-Lauenburg, the daughter of a princely house in Germany. She produced a son, the crown prince Erik, and died shortly afterwards in 1535 (Svalenius 1992, 135–9). Her death, at the beginning of Gustav Vasa's reign, occurred at a moment when both the nature of the Swedish Reformation and the king's grasp of power were uncertain. Queen Katerina's funeral reflected this state of affairs. While her rank was recognized – she was buried in Stockholm Cathedral in a prominent position north of the high altar – her body received no treatment to set her apart from her far humbler subjects. Archeological evidence suggests that, in keeping with contemporary Swedish practice (Fürst and Olsson 1921, 65; Troels-Lund 1984, 117–8), she was buried in a simple shroud of waxed cloth. There is no documentation of the funeral ritual used, and it can be assumed that the rite was probably the traditional Catholic service that had been translated into Swedish. Even more telling is the fact that there was no monument planned to mark her grave (Olsson 1956, 60, 63–7; Gonzalez, 2015). However, when Vasa's second wife, Margareta Leijonhufvud, who had borne eight children (two of whom, Karl and Johan, would succeed to the throne), died in 1552, a quite different funeral ensued for both political and religious reasons.

By 1552 the king's relationship to the throne had changed and so had the Swedish church. After several tumultuous decades of rule, Gustav Vasa had succeeded in eliminating serious threats to his rule, mounted from both outside and from within his realm. In 1543 he succeeded in crushing a major peasant rebellion, thereby consolidating his control of the realm. At the Riksdag of Västerås the nobility, now convinced that Vasa was essential to peace and stability,

agreed with the other estates of the realm to recognize Gustav Vasa's sons as hereditary princes, thereby transforming Sweden from an elective to a hereditary monarchy (Svalenius 1992, 205–8; Larsson 2002, 271–85). Gustav Vasa's transformation of the Swedish church largely coincided with these political developments. From the beginning his interest in the Reformation was primarily economic and political. Indeed, the king was theologically very cautious; his main concern was maintaining royal control of the church and its assets, not church doctrine. However, international political considerations, particularly the intense confessional rifts among the German states as well as the evolving domestic situation, led to the consolidation of the Reformation on a Lutheran model beginning in the late 1530s and culminating in the 1540s (Andrén 1999, 82–130; Larsson 2002, 232–331). As the king moved to secure the throne as the hereditary right of his sons, the Swedish reformers' insistence that "all power comes from God" provided a clear means of legitimizing his ambitions. He publicized his newfound faith to his subjects by including the saying together with his portrait and arms on the coins he had minted, starting in 1537 (Larsson 2002, 330).

The development of the hereditary monarchy, the ideology of divine right, and the theological shifts that accompanied the Reformation all entailed a shift in the view of the royal dead and impacted their treatment. During the Catholic period popular perceptions of death held that divine judgment was immediate, and, consequently, the importance of the human remains was reduced. However, Lutheran understandings of death viewed the deceased as sleeping in wait for resurrection; hence, the body of the deceased acquired new importance (Gonzalez 2005). Even more important was the shift to hereditary monarchy, because a hereditary king needs ancestors, a succession of bodies to provide a convincing precedent for the hereditary principle. What better way to manifest royal ancestry than appropriately magnificent tombs? Grave monuments were a means of communicating directly with the future and for the Vasas to tell their story in their own words. Carefully planned and exquisitely executed in alabaster, marble, and gilt bronze, monuments shaped memory by effectively telling the future what should be remembered and how (Sherlock 2008).

Consequently, when Queen Margareta died in 1552, her funeral was the focus of considerable discussion and planning. As the mother of hereditary princes, her funeral became an occasion to promote the monarchy and the royal house. The queen died at the palace of the bishop of Strängnäs and the initial plan was to bury her in the local cathedral, but the king was quickly persuaded otherwise and issued commands that she should be buried in Stockholm. Suddenly alive to the potential power of funerary ritual and the importance of lineage to a hereditary king, the king also ordered that his first wife, Queen Katerina, be disinterred from her unmarked grave. Queen Katerina's remains were disentangled from her oilcloth shroud and the rotted coffin that had contained them. Her bones were then supplied with a new velvet dress, which was constructed as a kind of half-garment that could be tucked around the queen's remains, and a new coffin. Her refurbished body was then placed in the cathedral sacristy (Olsson 1956, 57–67). Gustav Vasa's impulse to disinter his first wife and move her body to a location more in keeping with the family's enhanced status is echoed in the treatment of royal remains elsewhere in Europe (Weiss-Krejci 2001). While it is highly unlikely that the king was emulating anyone in particular, his action is indicative of the central role played by bodies in the construction of dynastic legitimacy. Meanwhile, Queen Margareta's body was dressed in a plain black velvet gown and provided with a crown and scepter of gilt wax. An elaborate funeral designed by the court humanist George

Norman (and probably the elder Vasa princes Erik and Johan) was celebrated in Stockholm Cathedral before Margareta joined her predecessor in the sacristy, where she would wait until an appropriate tomb could be arranged (Olsson 1956, 68–71).

The king's first impulse seems to have been to bury his wives in Stockholm Cathedral, but later in the same year, 1551, he changed his mind and gave instructions for a crypt and funeral chapel to be prepared in Uppsala Cathedral (Olsson 1956, 15–16; Gillgren 2009, 94). The choice of Uppsala is particularly significant. Uppsala was the seat of the realm's archbishop and the traditional location for the coronation of Sweden's kings. It was the realm's most important and most magnificent church. More significantly, the cathedral is built in a location with deep associations for Swedish history and culture, and therefore offered the perfect opportunity for the new Vasa dynasty to merge their history with that of their realm and with Sweden's mythic past.

Final plans

The introduction of Christianity to Sweden in the 11th century required the concurrent introduction of a new architectural type, the church. Though this subject is still under discussion, the general consensus is that, with a few exceptions, there was no well-developed tradition of structures intended for purely religious purposes in Sweden. As a rule, when churches were introduced into the Swedish landscape they were placed in locations that had served as central meeting places for the local population since prehistoric times. One exception to this rule was Uppsala Cathedral. The original cathedral (now known as Old Uppsala) was built on the site where tradition held that the pagans had built their temple and, as a consequence, was a powerful symbol of the victory of Christianity over pagan darkness. By the sixteenth century the pagans' true identities had long been lost and they had metamorphosed into the mythic Goths (Magnus 1555, 140–3; Petri 1917, 19). While no one has been able to verify the temple's existence because much of the site is dominated by the medieval cathedral (Peringsköld 1710), the ancient significance of Old Uppsala is confirmed by the presence of three large Iron Age barrows (Åberg 1979, 39) that during the sixteenth century were believed to contain the graves of ancient Gothic kings. In fact, Uppsala had been an important center during the medieval consolidation of the Swedish kingdom, and the cathedral housed the relics of Sweden's most important saint, King Erik Jedvardsson (Ahnlund 1954, 109–54; Lindahl 1982, 26). Saint Erik was a Swedish king who ruled in the middle of the 12th century and who fell in battle against a Danish prince in Östra Aros, just a short distance from Old Uppsala. During the Middle Ages his legend was elaborated, and he gained the reputation of the ideal Christian king who carefully cared for his subjects, defended the church, spread the word of God in heathen regions, and died a martyr's death (Thordeman 1954, xi–xx). When it became obvious that the original site of the Cathedral of Uppsala was unsuitable for the construction of a massive stone and brick building, it was decided that the planned cathedral be moved to a prominent site closer to the location of the holy martyr Erik's death. The new cathedral was begun in the 13th century and eventually housed the shrine of Saint Erik, as well as continuing to draw on the associations of its earlier location (Lindhal 1982, 27). Östra Aros became Uppsala, and

the prestige that came with the name as well as the aura of holiness and power associated with Saint Erik was carefully maintained.

The appeal of Uppsala as a gravesite to Gustav Vasa is obvious. He was the first king of a new dynasty and eager to establish his legitimacy. What better way than to interweave his history with that of his realm. Uppsala offered the king the potential to place himself at the confluence of history and myth and to embed himself in the landscape of his realm, exactly like the Gothic kings who slept in their mounds just beyond the city. For much of his reign Gustav Vasa had consciously cultivated an image of sanctity, and royal propagandists and church pastors worked to strengthen his reputation as a king anointed by God to lead His people on the paths of righteousness (Gonzalez 2006). By placing his tomb close to that of the holy Saint Erik, Gustav Vasa clearly strengthened his associations with ideal Christian rulership.

Even more significant was Uppsala's mythic Gothic past. History was of tremendous interest to the people of the Renaissance, especially to the humanists who staffed the royal chancellery and authored the scholarly polemics that defended the king and his realm with fine words and clever arguments. This was because historical precedent provided the ultimate legitimacy: how things had been was considered to be a reliable indicator of how things should be. During the 1550s the Vasa dynasty was handed a powerful new weapon with the publication of the humanist Johannes Magnus's *Historia de omnibus Gothorum Sveonumque regibus* in 1554. Magnus employed the finest of humanist scholarship to demonstrate that the Swedes were descendants of the ancient race of Goths (Johannesson 1991). His argument had the advantage of writing the Swedes into European history in a starring role and provided the Swedes and their king a sterling bloodline, linking them to some of the most renowned warriors of all time. Had not the Goths defeated the mighty, but corrupt, Roman Empire? Had not Gustav Vasa broken the hold of Rome on his kingdom by initiating the Reformation? (Johannesson 1969; 1991). The usefulness of the myth of the Goths to the young Vasa dynasty was obvious. Uppsala was the site of the graves of the ancient Gothic kings. There was no better place for the new king of the Goths, a valiant warrior against Rome. The choice was clear. No church in Sweden carried the same symbolic value. In Uppsala secular history, myth, and Christianity intertwined, providing the Vasas the opportunity to place themselves at the intersection of the sacred and the secular, history and myth, the present and eternity.

Within the cathedral Vasa selected a location of particularly powerful resonance as the site of his tomb. He ordered that a burial crypt should be prepared in the cathedral's Lady Chapel. This is the largest and the most centrally located of the cathedral's apsidal chapels; it lies directly behind the high altar and within sight of the shrine containing the relics of St Erik, which at that time lay in an elaborate silver shrine surmounted by a huge silver crown (Peringsköld 1719, 48). Uppsala Cathedral is constructed in the manner of most medieval churches, with an east–west orientation. This means that the tomb is in the eastern-most section of the church and is therefore related symbolically to the rising sun and the promised resurrection of the dead. The chapel had been a popular location for burials for centuries. The floor and walls were filled with numerous tombs, among which were some of the king's own ancestors. Some of the graves must have been moved to make room for the crypt that the king had built below the floor. As a shrine dedicated to the Virgin Mary, it contained a large altarpiece in her honor; however, representations of the Three Kings were included in

the iconography (Peringsköld 1719). Once again, royal power was highlighted and presented as part of the Christian story, thus providing another link between the king and the divine will that governed the cosmos.

Mary is arguably the most important human actor in the entire Bible, and as Mother of God she was recognized as a powerful mediator with the divine. Gustav Vasa's Reformation was one of a theologically cautious nature, and veneration of the Virgin Mary did not officially end until after Vasa's death (Gillgren 2009, 103). Shortly after the king selected Uppsala as the site for his tomb, he commissioned the construction of a funeral monument in alabaster and marble from Colijn de Noles, an artist from the Netherlands. The monument was never completed and can only be reconstructed from the fragments that remain (Gillgren 2009, 93–113).

The reconstructed monument is interesting because of what it reveals about the way the king understood himself and his world. The elegant Renaissance-style tomb included an extant statue of the enthroned Madonna and Child that bears on its back the Vasa arms in a cartouche and the Latin inscription *Salvator Mundi Adjuva Nos* ("Savior of the World Assist Us") (Gillgren 2009, 93–113). The choice of this as ornamentation was clearly appropriate given the tomb's projected location in the chapel of the Virgin Mary, but what is interesting about the plans that Gustav Vasa made for his grave is that they reflect so perfectly the medieval mindset. In the end Gustav Vasa's understanding of himself and his role as king was rooted in the Middle Ages. The king selected the largest and most significant of the cathedral's chapels for his tomb site, but also the one associated with the most powerful of holy intercessors – the Virgin Mary. Then he commissioned a tomb that prominently featured the Virgin and an inscription asking for intercession. Clearly the king envisioned himself as the dominant member of society – *primus inter pares* – but also as an individual in need of the intercession of the Virgin and the mercy of Christ. But Mary lost her status as intercessor almost as soon as the king died, and Gustav Vasa's sons understood themselves and their relationship to power very differently from their father. Gustav Vasa's choice of Uppsala Cathedral and the chapel of the Virgin Mary held symbolic resonance that appealed to the princes, and so that aspect of his plans went unchanged, but in the end it would be their plans, their views, and their needs that would come to shape Vasa's funeral, his monument, and his memory.

For this reason, most of the king's preparations for his funeral and grave monument were set aside when he died. The tomb he commissioned was never completed, and its pieces were left in storage or repurposed elsewhere. It was a new world, and Gustav Vasa's heirs' visions of themselves were conditioned by their humanist education and Renaissance ideals of kingship. The liminal space of Gustav Vasa's funeral provided them with a venue within which to promote themselves and an ideology of royal power that reflected their ideals and aspirations.

Of the plans that Gustav Vasa had made for his eternal rest, only the location of his tomb was retained. This is, no doubt, because the Vasa princes appreciated the religious, historical, and symbolic power of the cathedral. Princes Erik and Johan were particularly enthusiastic adherents of the view that the Swedes were descendants of the ancient Goths (Gonzalez 1999, 230–2). Both princes were also eager to continue their father's policy of maintaining the Church in a position that was subservient to the crown (Larsson 2005, 238–57). By placing a redesigned grave monument that emphasized royal power in a prominent position in the

archiepiscopal seat, they also saw an opportunity to provide the Church with a constant reminder of royal majesty. The young princes had also been raised in the reformed Church, and their attitudes toward the Virgin Mary were quite different from those of their father. It seems possible that by placing their father's tomb at the center of the chapel at the very feet of the Virgin Mary, the princes aimed not only to strengthen his associations with sacred history but also to suggest his role as mediator for his people. Indeed, Gustav Vasa had long sought to portray himself as a kind of biblical Joseph or Moses, God's true anointed sent to lead His captive Swedish people (Gonzalez 2006). This role received the endorsement of the Church itself when during the funeral sermon Peder Swart, the court chaplain, cried out "Oh you holy king Gustav!" (Swart 1560, fol. 599) and continued to elaborate all of the moments in Gustav Vasa's life when his special God-ordained stature had been illuminated (Gonzalez 2006). Swart made it abundantly clear that Gustav Vasa, like the Virgin Mary, had a nearly superhuman status and a role in Swedish history that was determined by God. The grave monument commissioned by Vasa's sons included no likeness of the Virgin Mary; indeed, it includes no real religious representations at all. Rather, the king in all his majesty takes center place in the chapel. Though his likeness did not completely displace the Virgin, the princes made it clear that he shared her place as mediator between God and his people.

The funeral

Gustav Vasa was the first of his dynasty, and his rule had never been completely accepted by his European peers, or by some elements among the Swedish nobility. Consequently, there was a real risk that the state would disintegrate as rapidly as the royal corpse. Consequently, much of the royal funeral was aimed at promoting the stability of the government and the realm and promoting the hereditary monarchy.

As soon as the king was dead, measures were taken to prevent his literal disintegration. The royal apothecary, a German man, was summoned to embalm the body, and the technique he applied to the royal corpse was virtually unique in a Swedish context. As far as I can determine, the king was the only member of his generation to be preserved in this manner. His elaborate embalming is at once a commentary on his status and on the extraordinary lengths that his heirs were prepared to go to keep the king and his memory intact.

Once embalmed, the king's body was literally reassembled in order to make a corpse back into the king. The body was dressed in a long black robe of finest quality velvet, and provided with a sword, an orb, a scepter, and a crown all made of gilt silver. Interestingly, the crown worn by the king in death was not like any he had ever worn in life. Gustav Vasa had only ever owned open crowns of the medieval type. For his funeral one of his crowns was modified: it was 'closed' with intersecting arches and surmounted with an orb topped with a cross, thereby transforming it into a crown that mimicked the imperial type of crown worn by a growing number of European kings. In altering the king's crown, the king's status was altered as well. The overall effect was to endow the dead king with even greater majesty than he had possessed in life. At the end of the process the embalmer was so pleased with his work that he wrote: "The face looked so rosy as a living person, so that many wondered at it!" (Olsson 1956, 32, 147).

Thus re-assembled, the king was displayed for eight weeks in an open coffin surrounded by candles in a black-draped room in the castle. Meanwhile, the members of the royal family, the court, and the government were provided with black clothes – and thus, with the king, plunged into liminal space.

In the meantime it had been decided that the king's defunct wives should join the king in his tomb and his hearse on the three-day-long procession to Uppsala. Consequently the coffins of both women were opened and the bodies were refurbished again. This time the preparations were more complex. Both women were provided with new dress fronts that were tucked around their remains and over their previous dresses. The dresses were designed with subtle distinctions in material and ornamental detail to indicate that while Queen Katarina was of princely blood, Margareta was merely noble. Queen Katarina's gown was of finest Luca velvet, the highest quality available at the time. The velvet was cut from the same bolt of cloth that provided the king's funerary robe and the garments worn by the crown prince when he followed his father's coffin to the grave. Katarina's dress was also ornamented with broader gold ribbon than that of her successor Margareta, and her dress and regalia were decorated with seed pearls. Both queens, like the king, received regalia of gilt silver that included crowns of the closed type so that they were, like the king, elevated to a status in death that they had never claimed in life (Olsson 1956, 63–75; Gonzalez 2015).

Few, beyond members of the court and royal family, would ever see the royal bodies or be able to appreciate the fine distinctions of their dress. Consequently, the court artists were set to work creating lifelike wax sculptures of the king and his two queens and adorning them with apparel and regalia that mirrored that of the bodies in their coffins. However, unlike the bodies they represented, the effigies were sculpted so as to appear alive, with eyes open. They were mounted on top of the coffins containing the bodies in a hearse that resembled a four-poster bed draped in black velvet and ornamented with heraldic devices that proclaimed the identities of the occupants. On the three-day-long march to Uppsala the assembled subjects of the king watched the rosy-cheeked king lying between his two beautifully attired wives on a lavishly upholstered bed as they passed through the winter darkness on the road to Uppsala. Though there is no evidence that the doctrine of the king's two bodies was ever developed in Sweden, there is no question of the symbolic importance of this display. The king appeared to be alive and, as his two wives seemed to suggest, virile. His sons wasted no opportunity to draw attention to the fact that they were the heirs of his body. Their mothers' relationships to their father were displayed and celebrated, and any hint of decay or suggestion of death was concealed. For this reason the decaying bodies of the king and his queens were hidden until they could be interred in the cathedral crypt with suitably magnificent ceremony, and the new and vigorous body of the new king, Erik XIV, could be displayed in all his glory (Gonzalez 1999, 153–203; Grundberg 2005, 48–57).

For many years the waxwork figures were used as a grave monument for the king and thus preserved the royal body intact and in clear view. The existent grave monument of alabaster, marble, and bronze reproduced the hearse décor in more permanent material but it was not completed until 1583, over 20 years after the king's death (Hahr 1910, 40–5; Fulton 1982, 300–7).

The monument elaborated claims to status that Gustav Vasa had never made in life through a complex assemblage of symbols and representations. The four obelisks at the corners of the monument are symbols of eternity and, like the closed crown, a claim of

imperial dignity through a symbolic reference to the tomb of Julius Caesar (Gillgren 2009, 115–25). The tomb is also ornamented with heraldic devices that refer to the provinces of Sweden and thereby provide a symbolic representation of the king's realm. But much like the king's crown, they were a recent invention: the coats of arms were designed for use in the funeral, they had no previous existence. Even his name as written on the tomb, the Swedish *Gustaf*, was transformed into *Götstaff* – that is, staff or support of the Goths (Fulton 1996, 303–4). At the same time, a separate series of heraldic devices displayed on the tomb and on a large wooden structure on the adjacent wall made reference to the Vasa family genealogy and asserted their descent, in ways best described as creative, from the ancient kings of the Swedes (Peringsköld 1719, 62). Thus the tomb served to preserve and glorify the royal body, assert the legitimacy of the royal house through hereditary descent, lay claims to imperial dignity, and inserted the Vasa family – literally – into the fabric of Swedish history and the divine story represented by the cathedral.

Apparently, at about the same time that the tomb was completed, the chapel walls and vaulting were ornamented in richly painted stucco ornamentation in Renaissance style, providing the tomb with a suitably glittering setting (Fulton 1982, 116). In all other aspects the medieval nature of the chapel stayed the same; it was crowded with tombs and dominated by the altar to the Virgin Mary.

Changes

Gustav Vasa recruited Wittenberg-trained humanists to educate his sons (Andersson 1993, 14–21). The princes believed in the power of history and appreciated the power of symbols and representation. For them Uppsala Cathedral seemed the perfect place to establish a royal mausoleum, but the Renaissance ideals that had made Uppsala so appealing faded fast, and only one of Gustav Vasa's sons, Johan III, and his queens joined him in the royal crypt. Meanwhile, turmoil reigned. After a promising start, Gustav's oldest son, Erik XIV, was deposed, poisoned, and buried in the relative obscurity of a provincial cathedral (Caspersson 1962, 9–11). His brother, Johan III, succeeded him to the throne. His reign was marked by religious strife as he tried to steer Sweden's Church back towards Rome (Larsson 2005, 238–257). When he died his funeral was the occasion of a contest between his brother, Duke Karl, and his son and heir Sigismund over the nature of royal power. Sigismund won the day but lost the civil war that followed, and his grim Calvinist-oriented uncle Karl IX took the throne (Larsson 2005, 336–73). Though Johan III was interred in the crypt next to his father Gustav Vasa, only a small provisional marker marked his grave (Olsson 1956, 88–131). The extravagant Renaissance-style monument envisioned by Johan and his heir Sigismund languished in a warehouse in Danzig until the end of the 18th century (Fulton 1982, 121–30). When Gustav Vasa's youngest son, Karl IX, died, he abandoned Uppsala completely and chose instead to be interred in the Cathedral of Strängnäs in a sarcophagus completely covered in Bible verses (Hallman 2006, 80–6). By the time Gustav Vasa's grandson Gustav II Adolf, the “Lion of the North”, champion of Protestantism and conqueror of Sweden's Baltic Empire, died at the Battle of Lützen in 1632 (Kent 2010, 73), the decision had been made to bury the king in Riddarholmskyrkan, an old church with royal associations

in the middle of the capital city of Stockholm (Liljegren 1947, 98–122). From that day to the present, no king of Sweden has been buried in Uppsala Cathedral. Perceptions of royal power and history changed, and the site lost its relevance.

Indeed, in the long run the grave of Gustav Vasa proved to be far more durable than his dynasty, which lasted only until his great-granddaughter Christina. Despite changes of dynasty, however, the tomb of Gustav Vasa maintained its symbolic importance because of the pivotal role he played in Swedish history and in the foundation of the monarchy. Yet time, fire, and changes in fashion all impacted the grave and its chapel. At some point new tombs and monuments were introduced into the chapel. The wooden structure, with its family tree elaborated in heraldic devices, collapsed and disappeared. The altarpiece honoring the Virgin Mary was removed. Banners rotted and were thrown away, and general neglect seems to have ensued. Then, suddenly, there came the promise of a revival.

In 1718 the death of Karl XII brought Sweden's absolutist monarchy to an end and ushered in a period known as the Era of Liberty. The nobility asserted itself through the parliament, or Riksdag, and took effective control of the government. By the 1760s this government was rife with conflict and deeply unpopular. In 1772 the new king, Gustav III, staged a coup, overthrowing the parliament and ushering in a new period of enlightened absolutism (Nordstrom 2002, 44–5). Gustav III had visited the grave of Gustav Vasa as a young man and had ordered the crypt opened so that he might look upon the remains of his most glorious predecessor. Now it seemed to him that Uppsala Cathedral might be the perfect place for the graves of himself and his descendants as part of his plan to restore the monarchy to its dominant role in Swedish society. He commissioned a study of the tomb, and requested a proposal for the restoration of Gustav Vasa's funerary chapel, although in the end there was never enough money to complete his ambitious project. The only work that was ever done was to scrape off the chapel's stucco ornamentation, which had decayed beyond hope of restoration (Olsson 1956, 20–3). No other progress was made. In the meantime the nobility were angered by their displacement from power, and the political situation grew tense. Finally, in the midst of a grand masquerade ball, the king was assassinated (Åberg 1979, 336–40; Kent 2010, 129–48). Another change in regime transpired, royal power waned, and the tomb and chapel lapsed into a state of decay.

In 1818 the Napoleonic general Jean-Baptiste Bernadotte became king of Sweden as Karl XIII Johan. The new king brought with him a healthy fear of revolution and new concepts of nationality founded in ethnic identity. He undertook to consolidate his dynasty's control by presenting it in allegorical contexts that intertwined his dynasty with Swedish history. His ambitious building program included architectural elements drawn from Neoclassical, Gothic, and Old Norse traditions, thereby allowing the king to present himself in a context that connected him to his realm and to the world beyond (Kent 2010, 154–6). As part of this program to promote a new national consciousness, the king commanded a thorough redecoration of Gustav Vasa's funerary chapel in 1827. A series of seven frescos was commissioned from the artist Johan Gustav Sanderberg depicting fairly mythologized scenes from Gustav Vasa's history. The king specifically chose the episodes to be depicted and was clearly involved in the artistic process. In the end the number of frescos was reduced to five, but they effectively fill the walls of the chapel in a solid band. Whereas previously the walls had been ornamented with family trees made up of heraldic devices, the new decoration covered the walls with characters dressed in national costumes in dramatic scenes

demonstrating the importance of Gustav Vasa to Swedish history and identity (Fulton 1982, 118–20). The centrality of the monarchy to Swedish identity was thus confirmed, and the chapel that originally commemorated a king and his role as mediator between God and His people was transformed into a chapel celebrating the Swedish people and the monarchy.

Though Karl XIII Johan had redecorated the chapel, the centuries had taken their toll on the structure itself, and by 1870 the entire cathedral was in desperate need of restoration. What occurred was reconstruction rather than restoration, as an attempt was made to return the cathedral to its imagined Gothic origins. Consequently, the cathedral was rebuilt to fulfill a Gothic ideal that had little basis in historical fact. Gothic art and architecture was undergoing a Europe-wide revival at the end of the 19th century. Moreover, the Gothic style had never lost its associations with the ancient people that the Swedes claimed as their ancestors, and therefore it seemed particularly suited to the pre-eminent Swedish cathedral (Zeitler 1982, 33–4). The church was also modernized with centralized heating. In the process of restoration and modernization, most of the old tombs were removed from the floor. This ultimately lowered the floor in the Vasa Chapel over 2 ft (0.61 m) and necessitated the construction of a low platform to support Gustav Vasa's monument. The nationalistic frescos and vaulting were provided with new fanciful Gothic stucco frames that included the Vasa family's heraldic device, and the walls and ceiling were brightly painted and ornamented with gilded stars (Fulton 1982, 118–9). These changes completely transformed the visitor's experience of the tomb. By removing all evidence of other tombs, elevating Gustav Vasa's monument, and framing it in frescos and Gothic stucco work that referenced Swedish history and ethnic identity, the chapel became completely dedicated to Gustav Vasa, the monarchy, and the Swedish nation. It also elevated the tomb to the point that made it virtually impossible to see the king's face. The monarchy literally became faceless. It was now an institution – not an individual.

At the same time the large Baroque altarpiece that had dominated the high altar since the 18th century and blocked the view of the Vasa Chapel was removed, and the inside of the cathedral was provided a colorful interior that both unified the space and heightened its Gothic character (Zeitler 1982, 50–2). Now it was possible for worshipers to view the sacrament on the altar and Gustav Vasa's tomb, if not body, in the same glance, unifying monarchy and church.

But by the 1920s modernity was taking hold in Sweden and the Gothic style of the cathedral – especially the Vasa Chapel – seemed old-fashioned and out of step. Consequently, the stucco Gothic tracery and ceiling of golden stars was scraped off, and the chapel was remodeled in a more modern overall style that maintained its nationalistic and monarchist tone (Fulton 1982, 118–20). However, by mid-century there were general complaints about the Gothic style and the poor materials used in the 19th century restoration, and the cathedral had begun to decay to the point that another intervention was necessary (Zeitler 1982, 51–2).

But such projects take time to organize. It was no longer simply a question of royal decree: the world had changed, and the monarchy and the Church were both in the process of being redefined. After centuries at the center of the political process, the monarchy was sidelined by the constitutional reforms of 1973 (Åberg 1979, 541; Stjernquist 1987, 237–42). That this process was well underway in the decades that preceded the official reforms is evident from the treatment of Gustav Vasa's body in the 20th century.

As part of the restoration project in the first half of the 20th century, the royal crypt was opened and the royal remains were discovered to be in disarray. Consequently, with the support of the Riksdag and the king, a scientific investigation of the remains of Gustav Vasa and his family was commenced in 1945. A team of art historians, anthropologists, conservators, and historians studied the royal bodies, cleaned and reorganized the remains, and returned them to the crypt in new reconstructed coffins (Olsson 1956). The crowns and royal regalia that had adorned their bodies in death now found new homes on the shelves of the cathedral's museum. Not surprisingly, the king of Sweden is no longer crowned and has essentially no power. At the same time, the Church lost much of its power and prestige. Both institutions have increasingly come to be viewed as historical relics.

In 1970 yet another restoration of the cathedral and the Vasa Chapel was begun (Zeitler 1982, 51–2). Now the view of restoration was one that sought to repair and preserve, but whereas in its strictest interpretation restoration is limited to cleaning and preserving, in this case it also entailed reconstruction. Some of the worst 19th century concrete Gothic accretions were removed, but for the most part the church was strengthened and refurbished, and the Vasa Chapel was changed again. The 19th century decoration, Gothic traceries, huge heraldic insignia, and ceiling of golden stars were all restored to their original places. In this way the tomb and the chapel became a space of mythic history, a relic from another age. The effect is romantic and anachronistic. All of the symbolic references are to the past, not the present, thereby consigning the monarchy to history. Like the cathedral itself, the tomb has become the focus of tourism more than pilgrimage, an artifact more than a living expression of power. Now the great Neolithic mounds that inspired the builders of the cathedral, the weavers of myth, and the propagandist for the king, work their magic on a new generation of New Agers and Neo-Pagans. The tomb of the king and the Cathedral await the writing of the next chapter of a story that, like the tomb, is never complete.

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9.

Assembling subjects: world building and cosmopolitics in late medieval Armenia

Kathryn J. Franklin

This chapter will explore the role of assembling in mediating political subjectivity, or the situation of social actors within regimes of value and power, in late medieval Armenia and western Eurasia. The chapter will explore exemplars of the assembling subject: the early modern collector-prince and the contemporary artist-as-assemblage. From the space opened between these modes of conceptualizing the subject-assemblage relationship, the paper will turn to late medieval Armenia and the world assembling undertaken by the merchant prince Tigran Honents. The aim of this chapter is to explore the inherent politics of assembling by examining the links between arguments for power and performed relationships to valiative and imaginative totalities – whether of nature, the known world, or multiple worlds of material coherence and commensurability. By moving from the assemblings of 16th-century Italian collector Ulisse Aldrovandi to a 13th-century Armenian merchant prince situated along highland branches of what is now called the Silk Road, I will develop the argument that the politics of assembling are not dependent on historical subject categories (modern science, pre-modern superstition) but rather manifest in historically specific, contingent ways through the assembling and mobilization of materials, spaces and discourses to projects of distinction and difference – the foundation of politics.

KEYWORDS: MEDIEVAL VS. MODERN SUBJECTIVITY, POLITICS, COLLECTION

This chapter works between the frames of assemblage as collection and collection as microcosm, examining the ways in which assemblings of things are taken for worlds in model or in miniature, and how in turn these assembled worlds invoke as given an assembler. A discussion of material worlds enclosed in boxes, bookbindings, or *in camera* may seem odd in a book on *incompleteness*. However, the intent here is to draw attention to the performed assembling of totality as an ongoing and contingent production not only of intelligible order but also of the ordering subject. Building from archaeological interrogations of the assemblage (Harris 2012; Fowler 2013) and drawing on critical histories of collection (Findlen 1994;

Foucault 1994; Stewart 2007), as well as upon performative interventions in identity (Butler 1993; 2007), I want to engage with ‘world building’ as a process in two interrelated modes.

First, I am interested in the tendency or affinity of things in assembly to entangle into worlds and for open sets to seem closed. Second, I will explore the mutual attraction within the imagination between microcosmic assemblings and present or absent assemblers, subjects who are conjured to inhabit the world of the assemblage, and embodied with the authorial power of its assembling. This is a twist of a standard modernist account of the empowered subject ‘collecting power’ by amassing a definitive and complete assemblage of rare, costly, exotic, strange, wondrous or otherwise potent objects. This narrative has been applied to state collections like the Kunstkammer of Peter the Great and private collections such as that of Augustus Pitt Rivers (Chapman 1985; Alpers 1991; Findlen 1994; Foucault 1994; Clifford 1998; Daston and Park 2001; Chiang 2005; Gosden *et al.* 2007). Moving from these examinations of collecting power to the powers of the collection, I shift my gaze to inquire whether assembling intimate worlds might be a praxis of subjects, critical to the power of selves and others to be imaginable as existent and agent in the world.

This study of assembling worlds as a praxis of empowered subjectivity opens a new possibility: that subjectivity itself might become ‘entangled’ in the things it assembles and the meanings made from them (Thomas 1991; Hodder 2012). Much of this work of ‘tangling’ subjectivity and materiality has already been done, as archaeology and social science more generally have effectively re-appraised the ‘body politic’ as not just constituted of citizens but assembled of various things, objects, and matters of concern (Latour 2005; De Landa 2006; Smith 2015). What I am interested in chasing down is not so much the uncanny ability of things to act like subjects in the arena of politics, but the ways in which efficacy and authority as immanent to a social self are revealed through assembling and are entangled within assemblages as hybrids of collector-and-collection (cf. Knappett 2008). This subject-as-assemblage, if not a cyborg condensation of “imagination and material reality,” could at least be considered in terms of assembled affinities rather than an absolute identity (Haraway 1987, 292, 296).

Assembled worlds, assembling subjects

With the aim in mind of arriving at a political subject who is the assembling he/she performs, I will proceed with a number of examples of the tangled intersections between assembling, assemblage, and power. By moving from the assemblings of 16th-century Italian collector Ulisse Aldrovandi to the 13th-century Armenian merchant prince Tigran Honents by way of 20th-century artists and their assemblages, I develop the argument that the politics of assembling are not dependent on historical subject categories (modern science, pre-modern superstition) but rather manifest in historically specific, contingent ways through the assembling and mobilization of materials, spaces, and discourses to projects of distinction and difference. These assemblings, assemblers, and assemblages enable me to pursue the possibility mentioned above: to discuss politics not as the control of things by people or the relations between subjects, or even as the capacity of things to collect, but as the point of intersection between acts of assembling, the tanglesome tendency of things, and the easy slippage between assemblages and subjectivities. Critical to this conjuncture is the

persistent imagined connection between assemblages as meaningful worlds and assembling subjects who authorize those worlds of meaning, both as a bulwark of power and a concern of archaeological analysis.

Ulisse Aldrovandi's ordered world

And so you may have in small compass a model of universal nature made private. The third [princely work], a goodly huge cabinet, wherein whatsoever the hand of man by exquisite art or engine hath made rare in stuff, form, or motion; whatsoever singularity chance and the shuffle of things hath produced; whatsoever Nature hath wrought in things that want life and may be kept; shall be sorted and included ... and then when all other miracles and wonders shall cease by reason that you shall have discovered their natural causes; yourself shall be left the only miracle and wonder of the world. (Sir Francis Bacon, *Gesta Grayorum*, 1594)

Current visitors to the Palazzo Poggi Museum of Science and Art in Bologna wander through a collected narrative of the history of science in Italy. The centerpiece of the museum's collection-of-collections is the microcosm of Ulisse Aldrovandi, an aristocrat of 16th-century Bologna and a professor of the University in that city, as well as cousin to Pope Gregory XIII. Despite its current democratic availability to the public, Aldrovandi's collection was constructed as a private 'cabinet of curiosities,' the enclosed and ordered world of an individual whose aristocratic prestige was ultimately inseparable from his expertise in questions of the ordering of nature (Daston and Park 2001, 154). Consisting of "more than 18,000 different things," including animal, plant and mineral specimens, medical drawings, watercolors and woodcuts, and the in-process texts for his numerous published *Histories*, Aldrovandi's collection was a contained world of signification and portents pertaining immediately to the political world within which it was situated – and which it inscribed *in camera* (Findlen 1994, 20; Foucault 1994). Aldrovandi's labor of classification, not among species but among signs, portents, and 'marvels,' was situated in the space of his natural cabinet. That space was textually enclosed within the pages of his *Natural Histories*, which presented the natural and preternatural specimens of the cabinet in the form of textual account and authoritative illustration. The descriptions contained within Aldrovandi's *Histories* were intended to embody the essential characters of his specimens, following a paradigm later conceptualized by Foucault: "the history of a living being was that being itself, within the whole semantic network that connected it to the world" (Foucault 1994, 129). The printed texts of the histories therefore, as much as the sequestered space of the cabinet, contain and present the assembled natural expertise of their author: a world built from marvels, exemplars, and wonders.

Ulisse Aldrovandi and his collection have become a quintessential case study in the origins of the museum and discussions of the emergence of natural history (Findlen 1994; Foucault 1994; Daston and Park 2001; Panese 2006; Vai and Cavazza 2006). I am more interested in Aldrovandi as the assembler of a world, in his cabinet and in his *Natural Histories*, in which collected objects, bodies and discourses constituted an authoritative claim for the history of nature (the form of the world) and Aldrovandi's place within it. As Findlen (1994) argued in her analysis of early modern collection culture, the process of assembling a collection "was not just a recreational practice for sixteenth- and seventeenth-century virtuosi, but also

a precise mechanism for transforming knowledge into power” (Findlen 1994, 23). The key to this mechanism of knowledge-power lay in the capacity of assembled objects, narratives, descriptions, and depictions to cohere into an intelligible account of the knowable world. By guarding such a meaningful world behind the gilt doors of their cabinets or on the engraved pages of sought-after publications, collectors like Aldrovandi channeled the power that mobilized such meaningful microcosms, containing it within themselves as princely subjects.

The princely collector as a world assembler, self-fashioner

The engraved frontispiece to Aldrovandi’s *De Monstrorum Historiae*, or *The History of Monsters*, ably illustrates the near-total identity between Aldrovandi’s renown as a collector and his status as a political subject (Fig. 9.1). At the top of the engraving, a large portrait of Ferdinand II de Medici, the Grand Duke of Tuscany, is crowned by the twin allegories of Faith and Justice. Below this princely portrait, Ulisse Aldrovandi (the Patrician of Bologna) and his work are presented on a banner. Flanking this banner, putti assemble the contributions and accolades of the work found within – the Sign of Wisdom, the Hieroglyphic of Fame, the Indices of Fertility, and Life Perpetual, all associated with monstrous wonders from Aldrovandi’s collection (Aldrovandi 1642). The editors and posthumous publishers of Aldrovandi’s work represent in allegory the collector’s command of a marvelous and potent world, as well as the mustering of that potency in service of his sovereign, Ferdinand II. The covers of the book contain a whole monstrous universe: Aldrovandi presents aberrations and anomalies ranging from deformities to mythological creatures, animal–human hybrids, giants, androgynes, representations of normal and aberrant fetal development, as well as cannibal kings and inhabitants of foreign lands. Aldrovandi also includes a discussion of the usefulness of monstrous nature and the history of monstrous representation in art and symbol. This natural history of monsters could be considered the ultimate exercise in cosmographic authority, as Aldrovandi created an intelligible order for those phenomena, which in their preter-natures defied category.¹ As is indicated on the frontispiece, *The History of Monsters* was published by the senate of Bologna in fulfillment of the conditions on which Aldrovandi bequeathed his entire collection and works to the Senate in 1603, to be housed in the Palazzo Publico. Significantly, with this transferal the authority of world-building which Aldrovandi had assembled was also handed over to the state: the Senate would take it upon itself to appoint curators and publishers of Aldrovandi’s materials, making the capacity of microcosmic author an appendage of state power.

The spaces that Aldrovandi and his contemporary early modern collector-princes assembled (in their laboratories, in their texts) were understood by the naturalists as well as their publics as identical with their identities as men of knowledge about the world and power in the world (Bacon 1594; Findlen 1994, 23, 293). Those invited to his cabinet, and readers of the books, were enclosed within a world that was not only orderly, but also wondrous and private to the collecting author (Panese 2006). As the objects and specimens in the collection were a legible microcosm of a knowable world, so too was the identity of the collector legible and knowable from the specimens he collected and his methods of collecting. This identity is presented in the space of the collection and the pages of the histories in a mode that is both intimate and authoritative: Aldrovandi has invited us into his ordered world of



Fig. 9.1. The frontispiece to the 1642 edition of Aldrovandi's *Monstrorum Historia* (image rights available under Public Domain)

marvels – but that world is always ultimately *his* to order. As I will continue to explore, this mutual ‘stickiness’ of the self of the assembler and the praxis of assembling has less, I think, to do with the ‘birth’ of natural history as a project of authoritative ordering, and more of a critical connection with the capacity of assemblages to entangle space and time into worlds of their own, and for those worlds to be ‘peopled’ by the imagination.

The assemblage as created world

Reflecting on Benjamin’s description² of his own avid book-collecting, Martin (2011) argued that the tie between assembled objects and constituted identity, of which Aldrovandi is so salient an example, adheres within even the most intimate collections – that ‘wonderment’ is not an artifact of pre-scientific superstition but rather a fundamental capacity of assembled things and the meaningful spaces opened between them: “Thus, the passion of the collector

for new acquisitions, and the opportunity that the new acquisition affords for recollection (and hence re-collection), is nothing short of the manifest desire to create worlds” (Martin 2011, 2). Within her larger essay on the imbrication of narratives and their objects within projects of self-and-world-creation in the modern western context, Stewart (2007) reflected on the function of collection as a mode of art concerned with the production of new context, yet:

unlike many forms of art, the collection is not representational. The collection represents a hermetic world; to have a representative collection is to have both the minimum and the complete number of elements necessary for an autonomous world – a world which is both full and singular, which has banished repetition and achieved authority. (Stewart 2007, 152)

I agree with Stewart that the primary power of the collection is not as a metaphor, a mere world-in-miniature; however, the authority of the microcosm is inseparable from boundaries of order and finitude which can only be drawn in relation to the infinite and the chaotic which remain outside. The power of the collection – and thus its politics – resides in its nature as a created world which is finite: the world of the collection has an author, and also has ecumenical boundaries, parapets of intelligibility, within which its values are contained. This practice of making and containing such worlds is intimate and personal, tied to the memory and authority of the collector – a phenomenon, which, Martin argued, comes critically to the surface when collections are removed from their assemblers (Martin 2011), broken apart, or otherwise lapse into incompleteness. For this reason in the contemporary context collections such as Aldrovandi’s, and the phenomenon of *wunderkammern* (curiosity-cabinets) in general, are frequently presented as a mode of “exploring the mind” of subjects who, like their collections, are construed as uncanny in their early or, indeed, incompletely formed modernity (Robertson and Meadow in Martin 2011, 12).

When the author and his/her collection are sundered, the containing boundaries of the assemblage take on critical significance as the process of assembling the collection is curtailed – furthermore, the identity of the collector is revealed as central to the process of making meaning from the assemblage. Consider for example, the boxed ‘magical worlds’ of 20th-century artist Joseph Cornell (Sommers and Drake 2006). Working in mixed media and in a mode that played with tropes of naturalist specimen collection, hobbyist decoupage, and bourgeois display, Cornell constructed small boxes within which he installed assemblages of cut-paper, found objects, sculpture and drawing (Fig. 9.2). Cornell’s assemblages have themselves been assembled by art historical discourse into various intelligible categories of meaningful representation: ‘museum’ boxes, ‘habitats,’ ‘dovecotes,’ and ‘soap-bubble kits’ (Sommers and Drake 2006, 41). The last category, Cornell’s collection of similar-but-unique assemblages called *Untitled (Soap Bubble Kit)* combines pipes, glasses, marbles, balls and other spherical objects, wire rings, and cut-and-pasted astronomical imagery into closed sets which play on resemblance and suggestion in the ways they seem to ask the viewer to create a total coherence for their contained worlds. Basic to the practice of looking at a series of Cornell’s works – as, for instance, in the Contemporary Art gallery at the Art Institute of Chicago – is an abiding reliance on the existence of Cornell as collector; one presumes that the artist assembled his boxed collections with meaning in mind, whether that meaning was a deeply personal relationship with Slavic romance or a life-long fixation with astronomy (Hoving 2009). The “affinity” between Cornell as artist and the practices of naturalist collection was reflected in the initial way his soap bubble kits were displayed: as collections of unique and marvelous objects, worlds in miniature (Hoving 2009, 29). There



Fig. 9.2. The collection of Joseph Cornell boxes at the Art Institute of Chicago (photo by K. Franklin)

is a politics to the regard of Cornell's assemblages: if they are microcosms, then they are worlds held in motion by the authority of the subjectivity who assembled them.

A contrasting example of the artist as authoritative assembler is the case of the 20th-century artist Francis Bacon – or rather, the case of his studio. In 1998 the Hugh Lane Gallery in Dublin acquired and “reconstructed archaeologically” (Cappock 2000, 36) the entire contents of Bacon's studio, which had been located at 7 Reece Mews, London. This transportation was no small task, as Bacon's studio was at the time of his death a series of rooms waist-high in things: artist's tools and materials, boots and clothing articles, records, light bulbs and the artist's own slashed canvasses (Ogden 2001). Most of all, the studio contained – consisted of – a chaotic pile of texts and images: the gallery notes “570 books and catalogues, 1,500 photographs ... 1,300 leaves torn from books” as well as magazines and newspapers.³ In addition, Bacon used the walls and door of the room as a palette, smearing and slathering these surfaces with paint. The literature produced in tandem with the opening of the reconstructed studio to the public in 2001 emphasized Bacon's Irishness: in this context, the cataloguing, archiving, dismantling, transport, and final painstaking reconstruction of the artist's studio (including the painted walls) in Dublin took on the aspect of a repatriation of the body from its foreign place of death to a consecrated home ground (the artist himself died abroad and was cremated).

The studio space was the location of Bacon's works; yet the curation of the studio is based on its significance as more than a container for the artist and his creative process. The studio as an assemblage of architecture, objects, materials, air, and light (even the dust was catalogued and transferred) was constructed in the process of Bacon's painting; conversely and simultaneously, Bacon's paintings were assemblings of the textures, materials, images and energies collected within the studio by the artist's singular genius. The images and scenes assembled within the studio circulate as signs within Bacon's paintings: “all appear and reappear as if they were slabs from some lost fresco of devastating formality and scale” (Gowrie 2000, 19). In a conversation about his workspace in 1991, Bacon stated, “This mess here is rather like my mind; it may be a good image of what goes on inside me, that's

what it's like, my life is like that" (Cappock 2000, 35). To encounter Bacon's assembled studio is therefore to encounter the artist's creative subjectivity 'where it lives' within the frameworks of interpretation surrounding the phenomenon which is/was Francis Bacon. The assembled world of the studio becomes identical with the coherent world of meanings within which the artist produced his works, and within which those works can be made continually meaningful.

The collection of Aldrovandi, Cornell's boxes, and Bacon's studio: these collections make up worlds of meaning assembled by individuals which are taken as identical with and constitutive of the subjectivities of their assemblers; more importantly, the collections consist of things – objects, discourses, and images – which are meaningful in relation to one another only through this authoritative relation that they bear to an assembling subject. The relationship of the assembled Bacon and the assembled Cornell – as well as the assembled Aldrovandi – to the 'real' assembling subject is of critical interest to archaeology. We are specialists in knowing the past through assemblage; how those assemblages relate to the agencies and projects of people in the past becomes a prepossessing problem – but one which archaeology is well situated to address. Central to this interrogation of subjects and assemblages is an engagement with the concept of assembling as world-building in contexts beyond capitalist modernity and thereby to, gently, push against the solidity of the pre/modern schism in ways of engaging with and making power-laden meanings from things. With this aim in mind, I will turn to the late medieval Armenian highlands, and the primary example in this chapter of the politics of cosmic assembling.

Tigran Honents' inscribed cosmography

In the first decades of the 13th century CE, the city of Ani was a major center of trade in Armenia and a node in networks of travel and exchange through the south Caucasus that connected Asia, the Near East, and Europe (Marr 1934; Manandyan 1965). Located on the western bank of the Akhurean River, the ruined city now marks one of the easternmost edges of Kars Province in Turkey. Though already a prominent center in the 10th century under the Armenian Bagratids and a thriving city under the Seljuqs and Sheddadids through the 12th century, Ani underwent a period of renewed construction and investment beginning in the early 13th century under the administration of the Mxargrjelis, themselves vassal to Queen Tamar of Georgia (Arakelyan 1964; Mahe 2001; Bedrosian 2004; LaPorta 2012). While Zakare II Shahnshah Mxargrjeli fortified and renovated the walls of Ani, the city's inhabitants undertook renovations and new constructions within the fortified town.

Chief among Ani's late medieval inhabitants in historical prominence was the merchant-prince Tigran Honents, who actively invested himself in projects of architectural endowment and pious donation which not only had a long tradition in Armenia and the Islamic Near East, but which were also central to the performance of princely status in the 13th century (Babayan 1976; Bedrosian 1979; Greenwood 2004; Jones 2007; Maranci 2008; Franklin 2014a). During this period Armenia was ruled by a class of princes and lords who drew their lexicons of authority from Sassanid Persian, Seljuq, as well as native highland frameworks. According to the late 12th-century *Datastanagirk'* or Lawcode of Mxitar of Gosh, part of the 'prerogative' but also the obligation of such princes was the construction and endowment of various institutions for the accommodation of their subjects such as churches and caravan inns, as well as market weigh-stations, roads, and bridges (Bedrosian 1979; Goshet'si 2000).

Producing architectural spaces was part of the performance of benevolent, pious authority expected of princes in Armenia, but it was also a practice by which princes like Tigran Honents and his contemporaries – the Vachutyans, Orbelyans, and Proshyans – enclosed their subjects within architectures of authority which situated their power and projects in relation to wider networks of relations in the medieval world. Charitable construction of spaces like caravan inns, bridges, or churches bundled the movements, practices, and projects of the people using those spaces and routes within the world of a prince's own power; charitable donation – and further, the performance of such donation in the form of visible inscriptions – was akin to a transformation of such bundled relations in the service of a prince's empowered subjectivity (Haroutyunyan 1960; Jones 2007; Pauketat 2013). Tigran Honents of Ani was no exception to this conjoined prerogative and obligation of princely place-making.

Nikolai Marr, the original excavator of Ani, observed that Honents was one of the most brilliant representatives of the late medieval Armenian world of trade (Marr 1934, 33); Honents' exemplarity derives not only from his prowess as a merchant but also, and primarily, from the efficacy with which he recorded his acts as a princely patron. As summarized by Mahe (2001), Honents' patronage is recorded in inscriptions throughout the city of Ani; his most famous endowment and the location of his most famous inscribed text is the church of St Grigor Lusavorich, built on the east side of the city overlooking the Akhurian River (Fig. 9.3). The church is a domed cruciform building typical of its period, decorated on the interior with frescoes and on the exterior with figural and vegetal carvings. On the eastern and southern walls these decorations include blind arcades surmounted by carved leaves and animals; between the arcades on the southeast corner, Tigran Honents commissioned a lengthy inscription⁴ which describes in detail his construction of the church and his provisions for the support of both church and attached monastery.

In the year 644 [1215 CE] by the grace and mercy of God, at the time of the rule in the city of Ani of the *amir-spasalar* and *mandarturtuxuces* Zakaria and his son Shahنشah, I Tigran, servant of God, son of Suleyma Smbatawrenc, of the family of Honents, for the long life of my lords and their sons built the monastery of St. Gregory, which was formerly called "Mother of God of the Chapel," on a rocky spot with precipices and covered with thorns, bought by me from the owners with honestly acquired means to its hereditary owners and with great labor and cost I surrounded it with a rampart. I constructed this church in the name of saint Gregory the Illuminator and I decorated it with all kinds of ornament, with Signs of the Savior and with holy crosses of gold and silver and decorative images, ornamented with gold, silver, precious stones and pearls, and well as with gold and silver lamps and with relics of the saintly apostles, with a fragment of the divine and lord-receiving cross, and all kinds of precious vessels of gold and silver and various ornament. I built all sorts of apartments for the monks and princes and I placed there priests who offer the body and the blood of Christ such that the mass is offered without fail in order to prolong the life of my lord Shahنشah and of his son and for the forgiveness of my sins. And I have given in gift to the monastery of Saint Gregory the hayrenik that I have bought in cash (*hayrenik zor gnel eyi gandzov*) paid to their owners and so thus assembled: half the village of Gawrohonik, 5 dangs⁵ of K'arhat, half of the village of Mshakunik, half of the village of Kaghatk, the whole of the village of Shamaksov, the village of Khuzac-Mahmund in the land of Kars, two dangs of the village of Shund, fields and the pandok [inn or caravanserai] of Xatchorik. Of properties in the city the baths and the public fountain, the local hotel with its shops and the vaulted-roof pandok, the barn behind the baths, the stables of Ter Sargis and the barn which I bought, the threshing floor and the income from



Fig. 9.3. The church of St Gregory Lusavorich at Ani, built by Tigran Honents. The inscription discussed in this chapter is visible between the blind arcade arches on the far right side (southern wall, east side) (image: WikiCommons under Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike license)

two oil-pressing mills, the stables and barns of the monastery, the garden which is in front of the gates of the monastery and the slopes from the Glijor Gate until the river, as well as the riverbanks, the garden that I bought at the Dvin Gate, half of a milling from the mill, all of [the revenue from] a fish trap, and two days a week [the revenue from] another fish trap, from the Glijor mill two days a week [the revenue] from a fish trap, between Besk'enakap until the bridge I bought a half of the river; 4 dangs of the hostelry of Papenc' and the shop which is at its door, all of the houses on the Street of Hatec'ik, all of the fields bought at the gates to the city, a vinery in Yerevan and one in Oshakan, a garden in Kosh and one in Aruch, in a place called Mazot, one garden in Mren, in Tsmak, that called "the field of the katoghikos." All the goods which I have bought, as well as the many others which are in mortgage which I have not inscribed here, I have given them to the monastery and their owners may reclaim them, as I have written in another will, if they pay in gold to the monastery ...

Tigran Honents' inscription is a rich resource because it provides a "portrait and nature of a man who had made his way by personally acquired wealth" (Manandyan 1965, 186); more acutely, the inscription demonstrates how merchant-princes like Honents assembled their authority and prowess at the intersection of space, materiality, labor and discourse. Within the text of the inscription, itself carved in tuff stones framed in arches soaring over the head of the reader, Honents enumerates himself as a person of substance – and that substance is an

assemblage, a list of things, places, buildings, and the fruitful labors of people. The ‘things of concern’ (Latour 2005) out of which Honents’ authority is constituted include objects (church vessels and pearl-crusted vestments and lamps), places (riverbanks, villages, and gardens), and architectural spaces (apartments, shops, mills, stables, inns, and of course the church itself). Honents also assembles to himself and endows to the monastery the labor of persons (fish-trap tenders, hostlers, storekeepers, priests) and parts of persons (relics of saints, the body and blood of Christ). These combine into a late medieval world in microcosm, which simultaneously contains Honents’ authority as a patron and constitutes his ability as a vassal: it is by the power of this assembled world that he renders longevity and potency to his lords, and prestige to himself.

Read as a world-assembling rather than a ledger, the St Gregory inscription allows us to configure Tigran Honents as a historically situated subject. It would be straightforward and simple to read the inscription as the tallying of a canny capitalist: Honents obviously is aware of the cash value of the things he lists, even down to providing a ‘returns receipt’ for their original owners. But the abstraction of the things, places and people listed by Honents into capital obscures the nature of his project as surely as it alienates value from materials, soil, labor. The archaeological task is to construct Tigran Honents not as a man who built churches and owned lands, but in his own terms: as an assembling of church building, gold and silver, horses and fish, shops and caravan inns, and farms in nearby fields and villages three days distant. In the space that is produced through the practice of inscription, his personal power and the world he assembles are coterminous. In this way we can talk materially about princeliness in late medieval Armenia, and about subjectivity as well. Tigran Honents and his contemporaries were not situated within the humanist discourses that influenced Ulisse Aldrovandi, for example, that the princely self could and should be fashioned through cultivated practices of emulation, imitation and invention (Findlen 1994, 296). The world Honents assembles is not the “model of a universal nature made private” conceived of by Bacon in his *Gesta Grayorum* (Bacon 1594). But Honents was historically situated within discourses of medieval cosmology premised on the conceptual, nested unity between the body of the princely patron, the architectural space of the church he/she endowed, and the ecumenical world within which that church was itself situated and circumscribed (Le Goff 1988, 83–5; Dadoyan 2011; Martin 2011, 23; Brown and Segol 2013). Available information on medieval Armenian philosophy suggests that subjects like Honents understood their own bodies (vessels for spirit) in a metaphorical relation to the created world, and saw as well fractal relationships between the architectures of body, church, and cosmos. This enclosed-and-enclosing unity of created worlds is suggested by the phenomenon of patron representation on the walls of medieval churches in Armenia (and in surrounding regions). On the walls of endowed Armenian churches such as Aghtamar (in Van, Turkey), Haghpāt, Sanahin, Harich⁶ and the circular church of St Gregory at Ani, the church patron was represented in carved relief or statuary holding a miniature model of the church (Marr 1934, xxvii; Ghafadaryan 1957, 44; Xalpakhchyan 1963, 15; 1980, 267; Jones 2007, 42). These representations in series – church, body, church – are often paired with foundation inscriptions after the model of Honents’, which evoke the person of the patron-as-assembled in yet another mode. The effect of these representation-assemblages is to combine what Susan Stewart has conceptualized as the interiorizing capacity of the miniature and the microcosmic power of the collection (Stewart 1993). The prince’s endowed church contains

a total, coherent world which is set in motion by the authority of the prince and identical with his body-bound subjectivity.

I have argued elsewhere (Franklin 2014a) that 13th-century politics in Armenia inhered within such projects of world making, undertaken at various scales and with varying stakes by subjects situated within the highlands but encompassing both ‘local’ and ‘world’ within the scope of their assemblings. Action at a scale beyond the local in medieval Armenia therefore required a ‘cosmopolitics’ premised on negotiating not just ‘the world’ but plural worlds constructed in the course of political projects like that of Tigran Honents. Located at the intersection of trade routes and major routes of travel, and between rival and contradictory claims to absolute power in late medieval Eurasia, local actors in medieval Armenia were cosmopolitan in their practice, with cosmopolitanism defined as a ‘worldliness’ derived not from edifying exposure to a world culture, but based on the negotiation of plural and imperfectly commensurate assembled worlds. Honents and his contemporaries often mentioned that they had paid the cost of all or part of their renovations, construction or gift in cash made from trade (Babayan 2005; Franklin 2014a). That profits from market trade and the care of “the barn behind the baths” share space in carved stone inscriptions implies an attention to all scales of activity within the collection of relations which is the prince’s world of authority. The cosmopolitanism of Tigran Honents and his contemporaries was therefore highly contingent, since their status as subjects and authoritative actors was situated between the embodied action of assembling and the coherent meaningfulness of the multiscale worlds they assembled in space, materiality and discourse. Within the inscription itself, Honents evokes various of the constructed cosmographies which by overlapping constituted this late medieval cosmopolitics; his epigraphic microcosm contains besides churches (themselves ecumenical worlds writ small as discussed above) pandoks or caravanserai as well.

Through the later medieval period in Central Asia, the Near East, and the Caucasus, the caravanserai as an institution of hospitality and patronage was closely linked to pious authority – in other words, to the identity of a patron as a force that unified his/her world of power (Goshet’si 2000; Constable 2003; Franklin 2014b). More explicitly, the inn was itself invoked as a metaphor for the world in Persian political writings from the 11th century, as a stopping place on a longer journey (Hajib 1983, 84). The prince who built and endowed road inns therefore enclosed travelers within stone microcosms of his authority. When its doors were locked for the evening, the pandok (from the Greek *pandocheion*, “all-receiver”) constituted a world in miniature. The prince Vache Vachutyan, a contemporary of Tigran Honents, likewise announced his endowments of farms and fields to newly-built churches to the east of Mt Aragats from Ani; in 1213 CE Vachutyan constructed a pandok or caravanserai on the road running north from the Arax River Valley towards Tbilisi (T’oramanyan 1942; Harutyunyan 1960; Xalpakchyan 1971). Excavations at the caravanserai in 2011 demonstrated the intent to construct space for traveling humans, goods and beasts: the inn was an ordered world within the larger world of princely care (but also princely control) within which medieval travelers moved (Franklin 2014a; 2014b). This care is reflected in the attentiveness with which Honents assembles stables, mills, fish-traps, and shops – and by extension horses, fish, grain, humans and their crafts – into the world carved in the wall of St Gregory’s church. Within the rubric of medieval Armenian cosmopolitanism, building such worlds of caring control was the praxis of a good prince.

This convergence of princely self, assembled world, and inscribed space raises the question

then of whether it is possible to conceive of a medieval Armenian princely subject apart from his/her assembling. Tigran Honents' assembled authority was a temporary world, contingent on material and spatial relationships that unraveled over time and subject to the assembling of other (sometimes more powerful) agents. On the one hand, Honents was powerful in his ability to bundle the labor, bodies and products of people and places as he did in his inscription; the implication of this political-subject-as-assembling is that Honents' agency as a patron of St Gregory's monastery and as a life-prolonging vassal of the Mxargrijelis was contingent on the continued productivity of mills, fields, and fish-traps, the strength of horses and humans, and the ongoing incomes of trade and travellers-inns. These practices and relationships perhaps continued through Tigran Honents' lifetime, and possibly after his death (but how can we speak of 'death' when his assembled 'body' still stands on the edge of the Akhurean River?) – though his listing of the resale values of his mortgaged properties suggests, perhaps, a prescience that his assembling will at some point begin to unravel. While the exact timeframe is unclear, sometime between the end of the Ilkhanate in the mid-14th century and the consolidation of the Safavid Persian empire at the turn of the 16th century, Ani faded from the scene as a political center and trade entrepot, and was slowly left in ruins.⁷ Of the self assembled by Tigran Honents, what remains is his endowed space, and the written record of his fuller assembling. The lost (or perhaps attenuated) ties of care, labor, and time between Honents and his millers, oil-pressers, hostlers, bathers, innkeepers, priests, fruit trees, plowed furrows, horses and fish are replaced with another set of relationships, as archaeologists and historians are faced with the question of how to cope with an historical subject who was an agent because he assembled.

Assembling and subjectivity

William Gibson's classic cyberpunk novel *Count Zero* (sequel to the genre-defining *Neuromancer*, and second in the Sprawl Trilogy) imagines a near-future world stretched between the annihilating vacuum of outer space and the infinite connectivity of the 'net' (Gibson 1987). One of the novel's protagonists, Marly Krushkova, is commissioned by an eccentric, wealthy recluse to track down an unknown artist who is producing boxed collages in the style of Joseph Cornell – but decades after Cornell's death. The boxes are no mere tribute or imitation: each is "a universe, a poem, frozen on the boundaries of human experience" (Gibson 1987, 15); the boxes capture the microcosmic allure of Cornell's works, and Marly's thread of the novel is driven by her search for the master maker of these boxed collections. This quest ultimately leads her to a derelict hunk of space station circling earth at a distant orbit, containing the cast-off memory mainframes of an equally decrepit family. In deep space, Marly finally comes 'face to face' with the maker of the boxed worlds, and the futuristic horror of *Count Zero* condenses in a moment of aghast revelation as Marly discovers that the assembler is not a person but a robotic arm, powered by an abandoned and randomly-firing, insane artificial intelligence. Watching the arm assemble a tiny world in a box with the deliberation of its constructed, simulacral memory, Marly is filled with wonder but also with sadness – the "sadness of time and distance," of encountering a servomechanism where she expected to find a subjectivity (Gibson 1987, 229).

The terror of Marly Krushkova at the assemblage-without-an-assembler speaks to the longstanding anxiety of archaeologists that our attempts to deduce agentive identity behind patterns in the archaeological record will yield an empirical void or, worse, shadows of our

own essential categories (Flannery 1967; Wylie 1991; Dobres and Robb 2000; Meskell 2001; Smith 2004). The examples of assembling and assemblage I have (briefly) examined here suggest however that a solution might lurk in the crisis itself, in the need to find a collector behind the collections because things once assembled ‘entangle,’ generating microcosmic meanings which suggest, even demand, a prime mover. The tendency of things to get entangled is not so much an inherent property of matter, but a critical part of why things – and assemblages of things in particular – matter to us. Assembled and entangled things ‘play’ with space and time, whether through the systematics of categories, the erasing of prior relationships and constitution of new orders, or through the containment of memory and desire in boxed microcosm (Biddick 1998, 175). The resulting elision between assembling as practice, collection, and assembler-subjectivity, hints that perhaps, in fact, the singularity of subjectivity is itself assembled; Aldrovandi, Honents, Cornell behind his boxes, and even the reconstructed Bacon were, like their assemblages, only whole because they were complete, only as ‘total’ as the fullness of their assembling.

If we can build from accounts of ‘assembling subjects’ to a definition of subjectivity as itself an assembling, then we might arrive at a view of assembling as praxis, and of “identity [as] performatively constituted by the very ‘expressions’ that are said to be its results” (Butler 2007, 34). The materials, actions and discourses implicated in assembling are ‘tools to hand’ not so much in the sense of representing a finite pile of collage-able fragments in a closed world of meaning (Levi-Strauss 1969), but rather lending and revealing themselves to projects in ways that are always tanglesome, and so tending to both deceptive solidity and dissolution. There is no ‘political subject behind the assemblage’ rather, assembling things, people and discourses into a world made intelligible by (historically particular, contingent) logics of authority is the doing which is everything, and which allows – or requires – us to construct the doer as an archaeological afterthought (Nietzsche 1997, 26). In the case of Tigran Honents and the late medieval Armenian ‘merchant princes,’ it may be possible to probe the apparently solid edges of the categories ‘merchant’ and ‘prince,’ and talk about actors like Honents in terms of the worlds they assembled – and how these assemblings constituted them in turn as ‘princely.’ This will in turn open the discussion of medieval Armenian politics wider for marked actors: the ‘princesses’ who also built churches and endowed lands, whose longevities were coterminous with the worlds they built in spaces, relations, and inscribed stones (cf. Heller 2005). Finally but not least, we can start to talk about the subjects about whom we have been silent, made squeamish by the message control of the historical record: the less-empowered assemblers who built worlds around hearths and between fields, in sight of mountains and in the streets of cities like Ani.

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Notes

- 1 For John Locke, for instance, monsters provided direct indication of realms of essence and perception which defy human capacities of understanding: the un-categoricalness of monsters

- indicates a perfection of Creation beyond comprehension (both of the human mind and its encompassing schema) (Locke 1997, bk 3, chap. 6, 17, p. 401).
- 2 In *Unpacking my Library* (Benjamin 1968, 59–61).
 - 3 From “History of Studio Relocation” at <http://www.hughlane.ie/history-of-studio-relocation>.
 - 4 Translation via Garsoian’s translation of Manandyan (1965, 185–6), altered from my own translations and drawing from Mahe (2001). The Grabar inscription is presented in its entirety in Orbeli (1966, 63) and translated in Marr (1934, 35). An updated version is also available in Avagyan (1978).
 - 5 1 dang is a unit of currency equivalent to 1/6 dahekan, which was in turn equivalent to the Byzantine *nomisma* or *solidus*. From Thomson (1997).
 - 6 In the case of Harich the church model held by the depicted Mxargrjelis was replaced in the 19th century with an icon carved from marble.
 - 7 The particular causes and processes leading to Ani’s transition from a vibrant city to a vacant ruin would be a major focus of continued excavations at the site; systematic and extended archaeological research has not been undertaken at Ani since the close of Marr’s excavations at the start of the First World War.

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